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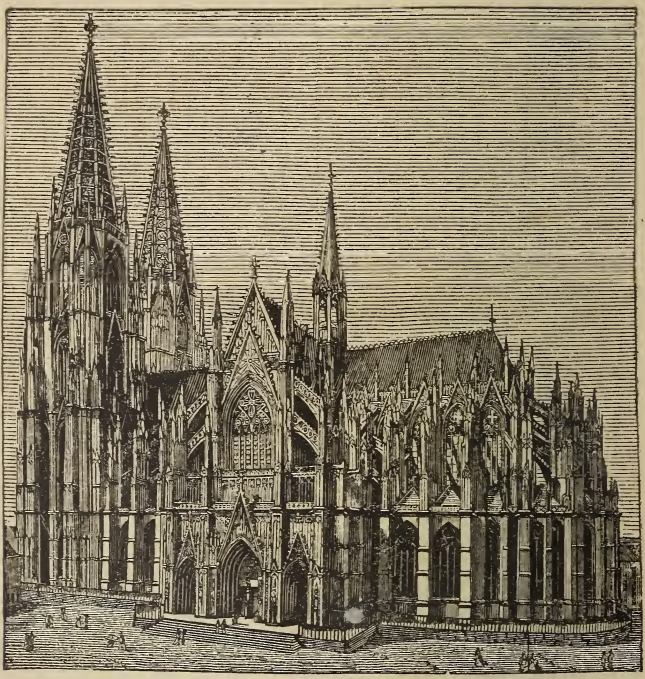

Cologne Cathedral as Completed, 1882. Page 25.

A CHURCH

AND

HER MARTYRS.

BY THE

REV. DANIEL VAN PELT.

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PREFACE.

THE writing of these pages has been a labor of love. It was a constant reminder of a delightful summer trip abroad—made thus delightful especially because it was pursued in no idle, aimless way, but with the purpose of looking upon scenes previously familiar by reason of favorite historic studies. It is not claimed that the result of these studies and visits is an exhaustive treatise: the author has attempted merely to render the history he has presented attractive to the popular mind, stimulating to further and more profound study (in this or any other kindred direction) rather than furnishing the means for it. But even if this volume should lead to no subsequent researches, the author humbly trusts that a sufficiently correct and comprehensive view of the Church under discussion will still be in possession of the reader who has carefully perused these pages.

It will not be necessary to indicate here the authorities which have been consulted, as justice is done to them in notes; but a word or two may be said in regard to the *Groot Martelaarsboek*. This work is a compilation which was first issued in the eighteenth century, and which has been edited and re-edited several times since. The above name ("Great Martyr's-Book") is not its full, nor even its correct, title, but it is popularly known by this, and for convenience in an English book it has been thus referred to throughout these pages. Its record really embraces all the martyrs of the Christian Church from the Crucifixion down, so that the Dutch martyrology had to be gotten from it by a process of sifting. Occasionally, too, the historian Brandt furnishes the account of a martyrdom which has escaped the "Martyr's-Book."

May the great Head of the Church, whose blood first fell that we might live, own this modest attempt to glorify his name and his faithfulness, and make it instrumental to the edification and encouragement of many a Christian heart!

D. V. P.

Brooklyn, N. Y., Nov. 2, 1888.

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A CHURCH AND HER MARTYRS.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH.—PROTESTANT MARTYRS.— WHAT VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS OWE TO HOLLAND.—MANNER OF TREATMENT.

STEPHEN, stoned to death in the presence of the persecutor Saul, was the first martyr of the Christian Church. All sects and all divisions of Christendom together revere his memory as the earliest of that noble army who have laid down their lives for the faith of the gospel, and whose blood has become "the seed of the Church."

Again, all those heroes and heroines of the faith who fell during what are called the "Ten Persecutions," under the Roman emperors, are claimed by the whole Church of Christ—East and West, Roman Catholic and Protestant, alike—as her own, and she honors them as her progenitors.

Hitherto the martyrs of the Lord Jesus Christ had been put to death for confessing their faith in him in the face of a deadly hostility to his religion on the part of the secular power of paganism. It

was the world against Christ—the Roman empire against the Church. A time arrived, however, when the Church became as a house divided against itself —when, armed with secular power herself or controlling the secular arm of the nations according to her will, she proceeded to exterminate those within her bosom who dissented from her doctrines or practices; and therefore there naturally arose a difference in the estimate of martyrdom, the papal Church denouncing as heretics those whom the Protestant world to-day honors as martyrs. Such were the thousands who fell during the Middle Ages among the Waldenses in Italy and the Albigenses in Southern France.

When the Reformation of the sixteenth century swept through the ancient Catholic Church, the ordained authorities of that body, true to their mediæval policy of persecution, and disdaining to argue or unable to do so, undertook to suppress by fire and by sword the new life of a more spiritual and a purer faith and worship. Another age of martyrdom, therefore, fell upon the Church, recognized as such only by that branch of it which adopted the faith and the principles of the Reformation.

Now, further, there is to be noted another circumstance in regard to the army of martyrs. Protestantism realized different doctrinal or ecclesiastical developments in almost every country where it attained predominance. These were determined

partly by the divisions among Protestant Christians upon the sacramental question (as will be shown in Part I., Chapter II.), and partly by the different political circumstances in the various countries. Thus it grew to be convenient, for historical purposes, to speak of the Church of England or of Scotland or of France or of Holland, and in many instances these were the names officially assumed by the Protestant organizations in these lands. In each of these countries, too, while the Reformed were passing through their seasons of feebleness and struggle, the foundations of these national communions were watered by the blood of men and women witnessing unto death to the sincerity of their faith and their love of the truth. Hence for every National Church there came to be a roll of martyrs peculiarly cherished and honored by its people.

It is now readily seen what is meant by speaking of "a Church and her Martyrs." It is proposed in the following pages to present a brief review of the rise and progress of the Protestant—*i. e.*, the Reformed—Church in those Netherland provinces which constituted at one time the Dutch republic, and which now compose the kingdom of Holland. As England points with a holy pride to that *Book of Martyrs* which recites the virtues and the sufferings of the saints who died at Smithfield and elsewhere throughout the realm, while Scotland dwells with fond memories upon her array of

"Worthies" who died for the faith, we deem it not amiss to pay our feeble tribute to those few of the martyrs of Holland whose names have escaped oblivion, being emboldened and encouraged to this task because it has not heretofore been attempted in the English language.

We offer no apology for bringing to the attention of American readers a survey of ecclesiastical events in a country so distant and so small as Holland. American Christians, we may well take it for granted, are interested in every phase of church-life or denominational existence within the bounds of our republic, and they must be aware that a considerable number of their brethren in Christ constitute two denominations, known, respectively, by the name of "The Reformed Church in the United States" and "The Reformed Church in America." Both of them retain the names of church courts, the methods of constituting the same and the distribution of authority among them which distinguish the Church of Holland. The former cherishes one, at least, of the symbolic books of the Holland Church; the other, all of the confessions and doctrinal standards (without exception or addition) of the Church in the Fatherland. Both of these denominations, again, owe their very existence in this country to the fostering care and diligent guidance of one of the ecclesiastical judicatories of the Transatlantic Church—the Classis of Amsterdam—in the

early days of the settlement of these United States. This we might have expected to be true in regard to the "Reformed Church in America," popularly known as "The Dutch Reformed Church," because it was established originally among the settlers or colonists from Holland itself. But the German denomination, or "The Reformed Church in the United States," is no less indebted to the Amsterdam Classis. Her earliest ministers were sent out under its auspices, were subject to its jurisdiction, and were aided in the organization and building of churches by money liberally contributed by its recommendation and under its direction. The first body among the German settlers that possessed anything like the powers of an independent church court—designated the *Coetus*—was created by the sanction of this same Classis even before a similar privilege was granted to the Dutch congregations in America.[1]

Indeed, if we may be permitted a short digression here, an inquiry as to what various great Protestant denominations, either in this country or in Great Britain, owe to Holland will bring out a number of facts of curious interest. The story of John Robinson, the father and founder of Congregationalism, is a familiar one. His "poor people" in Nottinghamshire, who had resolved, "as the Lord's free

[1] See *Historic Manual of the Reformed Church in the United States*, by J. H. Dubbs, D. D., Part II.

people, to join themselves by a covenant into a Church estate in the fellowship of the gospel," rejecting prelacy and the dictation of kings in matters of belief and worship, were consequently thoroughly dragooned at the instance of the prelates and the king of England. Pillaged, persecuted, banished, they sought refuge in Holland, "where, they heard, was freedom of religion for all men." For seventeen years Robinson lived and labored in this safe asylum, teaching and elaborating the principles of Congregationalism, which otherwise would have been crushed in the land where it now has an honored home. But from Holland, too, went forth the American branch of the Congregational Church which looks to the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock as the beginning of its existence.

The history of the great Baptist denomination in many ways comes into connection with Holland. That sad and disgraceful outbreak of iniquity and superstition of which the sect of the "Anabaptists" became guilty in the sixteenth century was identified with two men of Holland who reigned as so-called kings in the city of Münster, in Germany. But, on the other hand, it was owing to the teachings and labors and sacrifices of another Hollander, Menno Simons, that the Anabaptist doctrines became purified or, rather, that the evil practices formerly identified with these doctrines were repudiated by those who still held to the necessity of rebaptism or im-

mersion. Thus, through him, the Baptists obtained recognition as one of the sects of evangelical Christendom. To Holland, again, the Methodists must look for the one who first formulated the distinctive doctrines of grace of which they are proud to be known as the zealous adherents and propagators. When, under the Wesleys, the great work of awakening deistic England had been accomplished, and the time had come for a crystallization of thought and principles, the Arminian theology was that toward which John Wesley felt attracted, and which he wished it to be understood Methodism was prepared to uphold and proclaim. But, more than a hundred years before, Jacob Heermans—known in the learned world as *Arminius*—a native of Holland and professor of theology at Leyden, had taught and defended these distinctive doctrines in opposition to an ultra-Calvinism, arousing the famous controversy that culminated in the great Synod of Dort.[1]

Nor are there lacking many evidences of pleasant and profitable relations between the Presbyterian Church and Holland. Before ever the Pilgrim Fathers came to dwell in Leyden, Presbyterians from England and Scotland had experienced a cordial and handsome welcome in this classic city. "Another English church in Leyden was that of the Presbyterians. When the Pilgrims came to

[1] See Part I., Chapter V.

Leyden, Robert Durie was the pastor. The magistrates gave them the use of the church of the hospital of St. Catherine during specified hours of the day, the pastor's salary being paid out of the city treasury. As the congregation increased in numbers the church of the Beguins was assigned to them. This was probably the building about which Mrs. John Adams wrote from Leyden on Sept. 12, 1786, thinking it was the scene of Robinson's ministerial labors. In 1761 the magistrates resolved that on the death of the then pastor, William Mitchell, the congregation should be disbanded. He died in 1807, aged eighty-one years. The edifice was transformed into an anatomical cabinet and university library."[1] Presbyterian churches supplied with pastors direct from Scotland were also to be found in other cities of Holland, and, as we shall see,[2] one of these pastors became the first English minister in the Dutch Reformed Church of New York City. Again, there appears a passage in Dr. Wm. M. Taylor's recent volume, where he has occasion to mention "the influence of that close intercourse between the Church of Scotland and the Church of Holland which was maintained before, during and for some little time after the era of the persecution."[3] The

[1] Paper on "The Founder of Congregationalism," by Rev. M. G. Hansen, in *Southern Presbyterian Review.*

[2] Part I., Chapter VI.

[3] *The Scottish Pulpit,* New York, 1887, p. 161.

persecution here referred to is that under Charles II. and James II. in their endeavors to force episcopacy on Scotland. Holland then once more became the refuge of oppressed consciences from Great Britain, and now it was the Presbyterian Church which became indebted to the little republic. Most curious it is to note how this matter of asylum—one of the chief glories of Holland—was made into a reproach by Englishmen of the stamp of Samuel Johnson and others, intense Tories and bitter opponents of all that was liberal in politics or in religion. Johnson's indignation broke forth into the tirade, "Ye Dutch, come out of your hodge-podge! The great mingle-mangle of a religion among you hath caused the churches of Christ to increase so little with you, standing at a stay like corn among weeds!" Then another (Andrew Marvell) indulged in a poetical effusion to the same effect:

"Sure, when religion did itself embark,
And from the East would westward steer its bark,
It stuck; and, splitting on this unknown ground,
Each one then pillaged the first piece he found.
Hence, Amsterdam Turk, Christian, pagan, Jew,
Staple of sects and mint of schisms, grew—
That bank of conscience where not one strange
Opinion but finds credit and exchange.
In vain for Catholics ourselves we bear:
The universal Church is only there."

Much more direct and close, of course, than

the connection traced between Holland and these various denominations in our country is that subsisting between the Dutch Reformed Church in America and the Church of Holland. This will be pointed out in the sixth chapter of Part I.

But, apart from these points of contact with matters of local interest to us in this republic, we may assume that the Christian reader will turn with ever-fresh delight to the evidences of God's covenant faithfulness to God's own Zion, in whatever direction these may be found. In every country where Protestantism grew to predominance we see repeated the struggles of the primitive Church toward an organized existence in the face of the fearful odds against it presented by the surrounding paganism and imperialism. In every such instance there were the same feebleness and suffering, the same inevitable lack of organic system at the first, while the persecutions compelled the people of God to remain as "a nation scattered and peeled." But every national Protestant Church, too, in the very midst of the death-struggle, secured to itself more and more of organic form, and, gaining strength and stability through organization, stood forth at last "fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners," just as "the union and discipline of the Christian republic," according to Gibbon, "gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire."

It will be our endeavor to show how this process of churchly growth and consolidation went on upon the soil of Holland, the story of whose contemporaneous political struggle has been so brilliantly told by an American. But our picture will not be complete unless we extend the view of ecclesiastical events beyond the period when the Church of Holland had barely escaped from repressing perils. We need to observe how the spiritual forces fostered by adversity prevailed to carry her onward to her highest triumphs. Yes, and it will, we doubt not, be especially impressive to note how truly her vitality then gained sufficed to maintain within her borders a life of godliness and a loyalty to the truth which enabled her not only to survive seasons of sad decline, but to cope successfully, even in our own days, with the deadening and undermining influences of a latitudinarian State-Churchism. Hence our review of the Church of Holland, as will be seen, will not only include the period before the Reformation and that of the Reformation itself, with its array of martyrs who fell on Dutch soil, but will be extended to a brief touch upon events of the present time.[1]

A last word must be given to explain the manner of treatment. Impressed with the striking interest and deep instructiveness of the history in the Fatherland of that Church which it is our privilege

[1] Part I., Chapter VII.

to serve as one of her ministers, it had been with us the hope and desire of years to visit the scenes made memorable by this history. To the Christian the reading of history is the reading of God's handwriting. Where, then, the imprint of his finger is upon the very earth and sky, upon the streets of cities, upon hills and valleys and rivers, there, surely, may we draw near to God himself and lose ourselves in devout reveries about his great doings in the past. Our long-cherished desire was gratified a year or two ago: we visited Europe, and our course of travel was entirely determined by the purpose to look upon the places where transpired important events in the history of the Church of Holland. With very few exceptions we traversed the streets of the towns of which the various martyrs were natives or where they suffered for the faith. Indeed, as will be seen, we enjoyed the sad privilege of standing withing the very prison-cells where some of them awaited their doom.

Now, if, as some one has said, history is philosophy teaching by examples, it may likewise be maintained that travel teaches history by living illustrations. Look upon the scene of an event, and its occurrences and details will be indelibly imprinted upon the memory. Having visited a number of cities in Germany and Holland, we found ourselves traveling in mind from one period to another in the history of the Dutch Reformed Church.

We propose to present our historical survey in a manner approaching as nearly as possible this vivid method of studying history which occupied us while abroad—that is, we propose to invite the reader to allow his imagination to follow us to several cities each of which stands related to some prominent principle, period or event in the history of the Church of Holland. As we come to each of these and ask after its place in history we shall naturally come upon that which it will be important for us to consider, until we have presented succinctly and in order the several periods from the earliest times to the present. Having thus viewed the Church in her rise and progress, we shall proceed to consider the story of her martyrs.

PART I.

THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND.

CHAPTER I.

COLOGNE; OR, THE REIGN OF THE ROMISH CHURCH IN HOLLAND.

IT is a thing never to be forgotten to have stood before the cathedral of Cologne awed and hushed to speechless admiration by its overwhelming grandeur. Approach it from whatever side you please, let your point of observation be what it will, whether far or near, look upon it from the farther bank of the broad and rushing Rhine, gaze up at it from the foot of the hill at its rear or from the wide square to the south of it,—it rises upon the vision with a constant surprise, it electrifies the beholder with thoughts of amazing magnitude and splendid beauty and inexpressible grace. We do not ask after dimensions: it grates unpleasantly upon the ears to be told that these towers attain a height of five hundred and twenty-two feet, and that this measurement agrees exactly with that of the length of the church. It is sufficient to stand there and be left to drink in to the full the sense of its magnificence and symmetry. We do not need to be told, even, that this is the most perfect specimen of Gothic architecture: we *feel* the

perfection of harmony, the perfection of beauty, the perfection of sublimity; they speak too eloquently to our eyes to need the interpretation of language. The infinitely minute and the immensely great combine to do their several parts to produce a whole which excites and overpowers the mind, but which yet abundantly soothes and satisfies the fastidious taste. Wordsworth saw this building when it stood as yet miserably incomplete, compared with its present finished splendor, yet his Muse was fired to sing as follows:

"Oh for the help of angels to complete
This temple—angels governed by a plan
Thus far pursued (how gloriously!) by man,
Studious that He might not disdain the seat
Who dwells in heaven! But that aspiring heat
Hath failed, and now, ye powers whose gorgeous wings
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet
For you on those unfinished shafts to try
The midnight virtues of your harmony."

But it was not necessary for the angels to come down and do this: man pursued the glorious plan to its most glorious end; and now this temple stands a hymn, a symphony, a veritable hallelujah-chorus, in stone.

And there is a national significance connected with its completion. While Germany was still dismembered, disunited, a country composed of unadhesive

fragments, when it was torn asunder by the ambition of foreign potentates or crushed under the iron tread of French invasion, the great cathedral remained a fragment, incomplete, half beautiful and half dismal. It was such in 1824; in 1852 it began to assume proportions that promised better things, but even then the nave had not been carried above its aisles; as late as 1870, when Napoleon III. was defeated at Sedan, the towers were not half completed; but now a united Germany addressed itself to the noble task of placing in the sight of the world in perfected shape the most tremendous structure for the glory of God which its own native genius had ever dared to conceive or execute; and in 1880, six hundred and thirty-two years after the corner-stone was laid, an emperor of Germany was present to grace the ceremony of putting the topmost stone of the finial upon the south steeple. Then the work at last was done.

What can compare with the sight of those twin-steeples? Strassburg and Antwerp cathedrals each boast of but one splendid tower, their mates in either case still remaining unfinished, but in Cologne the design is complete even in this ambitious and daring particular. The effect, too, is simply indescribable. Time and again we came to stand in front of these steeples, to gaze and feast upon the sight, and we could never get enough of it. Imagine five hundred feet of sheer height of masses of stone taper-

ing, towering upward in a perfect bewilderment of graceful beauty, each part fitting so harmoniously into the others, one form gliding so appropriately into another entirely different that the transitions were a surprise and pleasure combined. All the time the eye and the thought were going up, up, up, higher and higher, dizzier and dizzier, until the spires seemed at last suddenly to refuse the impossible ascent. Thus they stood pointing with unerring fingers to the space beyond, where *they*, indeed, might not go, but whither they bade the thinking soul continue its upward flight until the heavens should open and God himself be seen upon his throne. Surely, if this be the mission it was intended that the genius of Gothic architecture should perform, its purpose was here fulfilled: worship had here been directed into the very presence of God, there to receive its joy and its crown.

But it becomes time that we inquire what Cologne or its cathedral has to do with the history of the Church of Holland. Looking back upon the ages before the Reformation, we perceive that all Christendom—or, say, all Europe—was divided into spiritual provinces as well as into earthly kingdoms. The pope and other prelates of the Church of Rome were temporal princes. The first great subdivision of the viceregency of heaven—that is, the papal Church—was into archbishoprics, and these were again divided into bishoprics or dioceses. Now, the

ancient city of Cologne was the capital of one of these archbishoprics, to which it also gave its name. It was divided into five bishoprics—that of Cologne itself, of Münster, of Osnabrück, of Liege and of Utrecht. Three of these dioceses lay entirely within German territory; Liege included one or two Belgian provinces and two provinces, North Brabant and Limburg, now belonging to the kingdom of Holland; while all the remaining provinces of the present kingdom (which were the same, also, that constituted the former republic) owed spiritual allegiance to the bishop of Utrecht.

As, then, we stand lost in admiration before the cathedral at Cologne, or as we pass through its magnificent portals and penetrate the dim religious light of the interior, as we walk its pavement, looking—almost in vain—to see the lofty ceiling arching over our heads, hearing the music of its organs rolling like the melodies of a distant heaven along pillared aisles whose far perspectives refuse to yield themselves to the naked eye,—we may reflect that we are in a place once intimately associated with the land which was the original home of the Reformed Church in America. We are reminded that before the hand of Luther struck upon the church door at Wittenberg the blows which made papal and archiepiscopal sees totter on their century-old foundations, *here* was the religious capital of Holland, whence proceeded the laws and the ordinances that governed her

then visible Church to the remotest corner of her provinces; and thus from beneath the shadows of this metropolitan temple we may well let the imagination travel back to these days of old and survey the condition of that earlier Church of Holland.

When, on the night of the 31st of October, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses against the cathedral doors of the little city of Wittenberg, the sparks from his hammer set on flame a fire that had long been smouldering in the heart of European society. There had been many "Reformers before the Reformation." There was John Wickliffe in England, who translated the Bible for the people five hundred years ago; there were John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who died for the faith in Bohemia a hundred years before Luther's work began; there was Savonarola in Italy, longing for a purified Church and burned at the stake for daring to do so.

Holland was not behind these other countries in producing men who did not hesitate to speak their minds against some of the vital principles of papal superstition. Away back in the fourteenth century Gerhard Groote, a native of the city of Deventer, taught openly such startling truths as these: "Many listen to the mass who are in mortal sin; for them the mass availeth not. He who dies in his sins perishes, though the Virgin and all the saints in-

terceded for him. To him who obeys eternal life can be promised, without purgatory."[1] He was silenced, indeed—that is, he was forbidden to preach in public—but his work went on in a more private way, and perhaps far more effectively, for he became the founder of a system of schools which diffused education widely among the common people of the Netherland provinces and reared more than one scholar of world-wide fame. And through this humble instrumentality pure evangelical teachings were also largely disseminated.

In St. Martin's church, in the university town of Groningen, we stood before a very modest mural tablet marking the tomb of one who was called by admiring friends the "Light of the World." We read here that proud title—"LUX MUNDI"—while a long inscription sets forth the glories of his learning and the wide extent of his fame. No wonder that Groningen has thus honored his memory, for Wessel Gansvoort was born in that city, and of him Luther spoke in no measured terms of praise. Wessel, or Wesselus, died in 1489, or six years after Luther was born, yet he so strikingly anticipated the great Reformer in many of his teachings that the latter wrote, "If I had read his works before, my enemies might have supposed that I had learnt everything from Wesselus, such a perfect coincidence

[1] Rev. M. G. Hansen's *Reformed Church in the Netherlands*, p. 19.

there is in our opinions."[1] In his works are found such teachings as these: "Our faith is in God, not in the Catholic Church, nor in the Latin council, nor in the pope. The pope might greatly err. Many popes have sadly erred."[2] He put all his trust, not in the Virgin Mary, but in Christ. "In the absence of repentance and conversion absolution avails not, and where these exist absolution is superfluous."[3] But bolder things than even these are recorded of him. "He spake against the pope's indulgences," says Foxe,[4] "by occasion of which several of the pope's court, being persuaded by him, began to speak more freely against the matter than he himself had done. . . . Also, in some places in his writings he denies not 'but that popes and their spiritual prelates, proceeding against Christ's doctrine, are plain Antichrists.'"

Such doctrines, openly avowed and taught in the days of Alva, a hundred years later, would have brought Wessel to the stake, yet in the Holland of his day a bishop of Utrecht befriended and protected the bold ante-Reformer, and he died a natural death at a good old age. This certainly is a significant circumstance. It speaks well for the scope which

[1] Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, edited by Kennedy, p. 98, note.

[2] Rev. M. G. Hansen, art. "Wessel Gansvoort," in *Reformed Quarterly*, April, 1881.

[3] Mr. Hansen, article cited *supra*.

[4] Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, p. 98.

the soil of Holland afforded for the work of those who were preparing the world for the great religious revolution of the next century. Among these laborers we must number another Hollander, Erasmus, a native of Rotterdam. He was educated in the schools of the "Brethren of the Common Lot," founded by Gerhard Groote. He was a product of that encouragement of learning and boldness of thinking prevalent during the reign of the Roman Catholic Church in Holland, and, although not identifying himself with the adherents of the Reformation when the bugle-call to arms had been sounded by Luther, this world-famous scholar struck giant blows at the authority of Rome.

While the archbishop of Cologne sat here upon his throne or administered the rites of religion within this head and centre, this crown and glory, of German architecture, while here he swayed his sceptre over the devotees of Rome throughout all the Dutch provinces; in spite of his authority, in defiance of his power, these thrilling sentiments of evangelical truth were being passed from mouth to mouth among their self-reliant, thoughtful, well-educated, independent people. It was the preparation for great things to come. It laid the foundations deep and solid within the hearts of men of a superstructure more glorious than the material splendors of the cathedral that now adorns their former ecclesiastical capital. For here was to be

reared a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ composed of lively stones, adorned by a worship in spirit and in truth, ministered unto by a royal priesthood, and ruled over directly, though invisibly, by the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

CHAPTER II.

HEIDELBERG; OR, THE RISE OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.

I. The University and the Castle.

WE leave Cologne and penetrate still farther into Germany. We sail up the Rhine through those very portions of its scenery which make it unrivaled among the celebrated rivers of the world. For a time after we pass Bonn, although the "Seven Mountains" have delighted our vision, we find nothing that has lessened our preference for the glorious Hudson, but with Ehrenbreitstein and Coblentz begin a prolonged series of such inexpressible beauties and sublimities, such sweet charms of landscape and such wealth of historic associations, that for three or four hours of up-stream travel, all the way to Bingen, we are in a constantly-growing state of excitement and our vocabulary of admiration runs hopelessly dry, and then we reluctantly admit that the Hudson must yield the palm to "Father Rhine."

We keep on far beyond, or above Bingen, until we arrive opposite the city of Mannheim. Here a

river comes flowing with considerable force and volume from the east, mingling its waters with those of the Rhine: it is the Neckar River. We turn into it, proceed for a little distance up against its current, and after a few windings it brings us to a city on its southern bank. We disembark, and find ourselves in Heidelberg.

The city of Heidelberg remains here as it has stood for seven or eight hundred years—that is, while it may have improved vastly in appearance and increased largely in extent and population, it has retained from remote centuries its "local habitation" and its "name." This can hardly be affirmed of its surrounding territories. Heidelberg is now accounted a part of the grand duchy of Baden, but formerly it was the proud capital of the Palatinate, or Pfalz, a region extending along both sides of the Rhine and Neckar rivers, and veritably a country abounding in corn and wine. The count Palatine of the Rhine was one of the seven electoral princes of Germany by whose vote the imperial throne was filled whenever a vacancy occurred in that exalted office. The fertility of these territories made their rulers wealthy; their electoral dignity raised them to a rank but little short of royalty; and thus, when the counts Palatine chose for their residence this beautiful spot upon the Neckar's banks and founded the city of Heidelberg, we need not be surprised that it became one of the most im-

portant cities of the land. The place to-day is famous for two things which have also most to do with the purpose of our present writing: these are the university and the castle.

During the first week of August, 1886, great multitudes were gathered at Heidelberg from every portion of the civilized world. Festivities of every kind—banquets where two thousand guests at once sat down to the abundant cheer, processions in which many thousands more took part arrayed in the costumes of days long past and representing pageants or living tableaux of great historic scenes—attested that an event of more than ordinary importance was being celebrated in this ancient city. It was, in fact, the celebration of the five hundredth anniversary of the founding of Heidelberg University by Rupert I., count Palatine of the Rhine. Five hundred years—1386 to 1886! What multitudinous changes everywhere, what astounding discoveries, have been made within the interval! What advances then undreamed of have occurred in the knowledge of earth and sky—in science, learning, society, politics and religion—since this institution of learning, the oldest of all the universities of Germany, began its honored career!

Going up the hill beyond the university buildings, we begin the ascent of the mountain towering above the city at its eastern extremity. Halfway up, on a level higher than the roofs of its proudest

cathedrals, we come upon the far-famed castle, and here abound memorials of the ages long gone by. Taking our stand in the centre of the spacious courtyard, we observe with wonder the imposing ruins that surround us on all sides. This is no castle in the ordinary sense of the word: it is, rather, a collection of royal residences, like the Alhambra in Spain. This courtyard is a quadrangle whose sides were palaces. Here many hands have built, successive princes adding still larger or still costlier piles to those bequeathed them by their predecessors. But all their pride of beauty, costliness and grandeur has departed or lives but in splendid ruin. Lofty walls still rear themselves skyward, but vacancy is behind their staring windows. Tremendous towers still show something of their former strength, but some were blown to pieces by malicious foes, others stand blackened and roofless by the ravages of fire and of tempest. There is one ruin that presents a more remarkable appearance than all the rest, and we note it also particularly because of its historic association, as will appear later. "Between two plain gray Gothic towers, both striving upward," observes a recent writer, "there is unfolded to us a façade of rich red stone, its quiet horizontal lines lying in gracefully-proportioned tiers, one above the other, while the perpendicular or wavy forms of statue and relief, of column and arabesque, cast in harmonious profusion over the stern archi-

tecture, transfigure it from ponderous stone into a living, breathing whole." But behind this elegant façade, with its spiral columns and sculptured portals, with its almost inordinate wealth of ornamentation, there are great gaping spaces where once there were halls and chambers fit to receive emperors. Yawning depths look sheer up from the once-vaulted cellars to the open sky, without a single ceiling in all these successive stories, or a roof, to intercept the view. At another turn confronts us a palace where a pious descendant of this long line of princes sought to immortalize his illustrious ancestry by placing the statues of all of them along its walls. How rudely has the hand of time or of war or of the tempest dealt with these poor effigies! Some are decapitated, others are severed in twain; again, others are sadly lacking in one or another limb. Indeed, scarce one is left to maintain the dignity and the pride wherewith at first they were invested. This is the latest palace of them all, having been completed in 1608, while the first and oldest goes back to a period nearly four hundred years earlier, and looks down upon us with an antiquity of six or seven hundred years mellowing its hoary walls.

Why should the princes of the Palatinate have chosen this spot to lavish here their wealth? Why did they invite men of genius to construct here the finest triumphs of their taste and skill? Pass from the courtyard beneath yonder low arch-

way to the broad esplanade in front of the most modern of these buildings, or climb the winding stairs of the octagonal tower at the north-east corner of the ruins, and look out upon your surroundings. Right beneath your feet nestles the city of Heidelberg close up against the mountain's base, and stretches its busy streets, adorned by many ancient and stately edifices, along a plain that becomes ever wider as the hills recede from the river. Behind us the brow of the mountain towers high above our present elevated position, and from around its shoulder, on the east, the stream of the Neckar comes winding toward us. The river, as it passes the city, flows beneath two fine bridges, the upper one of stone and a hundred years old, the lower a modern structure of iron. At length its serpentine course is lost to view in the far west before we can see it meeting the Rhine. Opposite us a mountain still higher than the castled hill on which we stand rises abruptly from the Neckar's banks. But to our left, westward, both mountains descend rapidly to the plains below and leave open to the view a stretch of level country bounded only by the hills beyond the Rhine. The ancient builders of these ruined palaces knew what was grand and beautiful in nature as well as in architecture, and no more worthy site could have been selected for their magnificent creations.

This, then, is a feeble attempt to depict Heidel-

berg, with its far-famed castle and university. Now, what is its bearing upon the history of the Church of Holland? This Church possesses a symbol, a book, an heirloom, of the faith of the fathers, which has instructed and preserved that of later generations. It goes by the name of *The Heidelberg Catechism.* We shall not look in vain for the connection between Heidelberg and the Church in the Fatherland if we study the history of the Catechism which here received its birth.

The first impressions of the Reformation were brought to Heidelberg by no less a person than Martin Luther himself. In April, 1518, or less than six months after that memorable October night which is assigned as the date for the beginning of the Reformation, Luther arrived at this city, having journeyed from Wittenberg, for a great part of the way on foot. A General Chapter of the order of Augustinian monks was to be held at Heidelberg, and Luther—a member of the order—whose bold deed had already won him fame, was strongly urged by the brethren to favor this meeting with his presence. His lodgings were assigned to him in a monastery of the order situated in the village of Neuenheim, on the banks of the Neckar, opposite the city. Luther bore with him a letter of introduction and commendation from his sovereign and patron, the elector of Saxony, to the elector Palatine, Louis the Pacific. He must, therefore,

announce himself to the illustrious occupant of these imposing palaces. All but those of Otto Henry and Frederick IV. were then in existence, and Louis himself was a famous builder.

We can readily trace Luther's footsteps as he proceeded to the castle. The village of Neuenheim lies a little below the modern iron bridge across the Neckar. There never was a bridge here until the present one was built, not many years ago. The upper bridge occupies the site of one or two previous bridges, and toward its predecessor, which then spanned the broad and rapid tide, Luther was fain to direct his way. Crossing the lower bridge, we walked along the same river-road which he must have followed on that April day long ago. As he emerged from a defile in the mountain where the monastery stood, back of the village, and put foot upon this river-road, his eye must at once have caught the noble proportions of the castle buildings, as we do to-day of their hardly less noble ruins. Continuing our walk opposite and past the city, the ruined magnificence grows upon the sight. Perhaps Luther, still more fascinated by the view of their undimmed glory, passed on beyond the bridge, and as we too go ever farther up the road along the river till far above the site of the castle, from whatever point we observe them, the ruins have for us new surprises in the way both of their own solemn grandeur and of the delightsomeness of their loca-

tion. A wooden bridge then led across the river. It is not likely that the gate which admits us into the city at the farther extremity of the present one was the same beneath which Luther passed. At the castle the letter of the Saxon elector procured him a cordial and flattering welcome; he was frequently invited to the table of the count palatine with other distinguished guests, and we have evidence that he enjoyed what he saw here. "We looked with delight," he wrote, "upon all the splendors of the Palatine palace, admiring the adornments, the collections of armor—in short, all the remarkable objects which are to be found within this illustrious and truly regal castle."[1]

But Luther, while keenly enjoying these delights, had more serious business before him. When a person of learning, and especially a professor in a university, visited another university in those days, it was customary for the visitor to challenge the members of the latter to a public disputation upon certain theses or propositions submitted by himself. Luther, accordingly, took advantage of this custom to proclaim a pure gospel in Heidelberg during his stay. He invited a discussion upon a series of statements which he called *Paradoxes*. The first one read as follows: "The law of God is a saving doctrine of life. Nevertheless, it cannot aid man in the attainment of righteousness: it much rather hin-

[1] D'Aubigné, *Histoire de la Reformation*, vol. i. p. 331.

ders him." Others were: "It is certain that man must needs utterly despair of himself in order to be made capable of receiving the grace of Christ. . . . Not he is justified who doeth many works, but he who without works hath much faith in Jesus Christ. . . . The law says, Do this; and what it commands is never done. Grace says, Believe on such a One; and, lo! all things are already accomplished."[1]

To us, of course, these propositions are not at all paradoxical, because we are now so familiar with these doctrines of grace; they were startlingly strange and novel, however, to the Roman Catholic theologians of Heidelberg University. And their drift was unmistakable. It was the preaching of the great foundation and corner-stone of the Reformation, the doctrine of justification by faith. Luther triumphed over his disputants, and converts were won to his opinions. The Reformation had gained a foothold in Heidelberg.

II. Frederick the Pious and the Catechism.

That splendid ruin already spoken of, so highly ornate, yet so elegant, with its profusely-decorated façade, is called the "Otto Henry" building. The count of that name reigned over the Palatinate from 1556 to 1559. These three brief years were sufficient, however, for him to erect the most elaborate and sumptuous of all the castle-palaces. He was

[1] D'Aubigné, *Histoire de la Réformation*, Vol. I. pp. 332, 333.

succeeded by his cousin, Frederick III., surnamed "the Pious." The latter's grandson, Frederick IV., built the most recent of these structures—that with the ancestral statues. But Frederick the Pious did not add any new structures to the others, nor even embellish any of the old; he was content to occupy the beautiful palace bequeathed to him by Otto Henry. Meantime, his heart was set upon building of quite another kind—that of the Church of God. A fervent zeal for the Reformation possessed him, and to lay deep and firm a foundation of spiritual, evangelical knowledge in the hearts of his people he ordered the composition of a catechism. Why he desired such a catechism, why it was made to assume the character it did, are questions that lead us at once to an insight into the religious conditions of those times.

Scarce had the deeply-furrowed field of European society been sown with the good seed of the kingdom, purified from the worthless chaff of superstition and the noxious weeds of deadly errors, when the arch-enemy of souls came with the tares of dogmatic contention and disputatious bitterness. The Christ who had been preached in his divine simplicity, and who had at first been thus savingly accepted, was now suddenly conceived to be divided—to mean one thing to one party, and something else to another.

For what reason had the hearts of Protestant

Christians thus become divided? Because Luther felt constrained to interpret literally certain words of Jesus at the institution of the Lord's Supper. He had said, "*This is my body.*" Luther insisted that Jesus meant to say that, after consecration, his real flesh and blood co-exist in and with the natural elements of bread and wine. To many this alleged effect of consecration, which was styled *consubstantiation*, seemed to differ but little from *transubstantiation*, and was regarded by them as a relic of Romanism. The Swiss Reformer Zwinglius, and Calvin with him, held that Jesus meant to convey no such literal idea about the sacrament. When he said, "*This is my body*," he spoke figuratively, as he did so often. The bread *signified* his body. Or, to go somewhat farther, the bread *was* his body *symbolically*, but not *actually*. No conciliation, however, could be effected upon this point. Upon this rock of mutual offence the Protestant Church split. Those who believed as Luther did, and who accepted confessions of faith or catechisms setting forth his view, naturally came to be named with his name, and are known as Lutherans to this day.

And what of the others? By what name should they be distinguished from those who would no longer affiliate with them? They did not possess one single leader after whom they might be called. Away back among the mountains of Switzerland,

standing in their rugged and silent grandeur, deep down within her charming valleys, where broad, glassy lakes reflect the inaccessible snow-capped peaks far and near, a voice as of a mighty man had been heard to proclaim great things touching the truth of God. Into these mountain-fastnesses the fame of Luther did not penetrate till the year 1518. Two years at least before that, in 1516, Ulrich Zwinglius had begun to preach the truth of Christ in the face of Romish errors, and in a manner strikingly similar to that of Luther himself. It was the same Holy Spirit in both, rousing within them the conviction of a purer gospel. Thus, too, they labored and taught harmoniously after they became acquainted with each other's work. But upon the interpretation of the sacramental bread and wine the Swiss Reformer felt compelled to part company with Luther, and he necessarily became the champion or leader of an opposite tendency or party in the Protestant world. Yet was he not alone. Not long after the death of Zwinglius the celebrated John Calvin of Geneva published the first system of theology which Protestantism had produced. In this he did not support Luther's literal views of the body and blood of Christ in the communion, but neither was he so radical in his disavowal of those opinions as Zwinglius had been. He ascribed to the bread and the wine as much spiritual significance and power as the words of Christ and the

spirit of a reasonable gospel would allow. This book did not, indeed, compose differences, but it gave a solid ground for belief to those who could not follow Luther. Still, the question remained, What name would be appropriate to their party? They were not the adherents of one man the overshadowing influence or power of whose personality would make them glad to call themselves after him; they represented what might be called a tendency or spirit of religious thought rather than the fixed opinions of one individual. Accordingly, their choice happily fell upon a nobler and more comprehensive designation. The name that became their proud distinction was simply that of "Reformed"—truly a broad and catholic title, for all Protestant Christians, even the Lutherans, were *Reformed*.

With these doctrinal divisions in the ranks of the Reformers, there soon also arose territorial distinctions, according as the princes of Germany sympathized with Luther or with the views of the Reformed Church. A very small minority of these rulers, however, at any time cast in their lot with the latter; for a long period only one among them stood forth from all the rest as the upholder of its doctrines.

We have seen Luther at Heidelberg; we have heard him propound and proclaim the vital doctrines of salvation here. These seeds of truth were

not scattered in vain, and it is to be noted that the truth he then taught was as yet untainted by the subsequent disputations that rent the Church asunder. It bore fruit in harmony with the purity and simplicity of the gospel thus preached. When the controversy at last broke out and called for the drawing of lines among Protestants, two successive electors—Frederick II. and Otto Henry—sided with the milder presentation of the sacramental doctrine put forth by Luther's friend and colleague Philip Melanchthon and encouraged the promulgation of his teachings within their territories. But when Frederick III. succeeded to the electorate of the Palatine, he went farther than the others in the direction away from Luther, and boldly avowed his sympathy with the Reformed.

Frederick was, indeed, a remarkable prince. History bears this record of him: "He appears to have been in all respects what we may call a model prince, in whom the most excellent mental endowments were joined to the best qualities of the heart, and whose whole life was a commentary on his wisdom and virtue. His religious character in particular commanded the universal respect of his own age, as it has been the admiration of all later times. Piety with him was no empty sentiment or simply outward profession; it formed the ruling power of his life, and, as has been well remarked, it took in the prince no less

than the man."[1] Dwelling in the sumptuous palace just fresh from the hands of his predecessor, Otto Henry, he thought not of the splendor that surrounded him, but only of the miserable ignorance of the people of his dominions regarding the truth of God. Sovereignty to him was a solemn responsibility laid upon him by God and rendering him accountable for the spiritual welfare of his subjects. "There is something beautiful, indeed, in the child-like simplicity with which he speaks of his princely office and trust in this view. For himself, at least, his work was theocratic in the best sense of the term. He was in his own eyes prince and ruler 'by the grace of God' in order that he might lead his people in the way of righteousness and show himself a true 'nursing father' to the Church."[2] This duty lay heavily upon his heart, and he sought anxiously after means to lead the masses to a saving knowledge of God. It became, therefore, his desire to disseminate the Reformed views among his people. But how shall this be done? There were, to be sure, the *Institutes* of Calvin, but this work was utterly beyond the comprehension of the unlearned. Something popular was needed, something that should set forth the same grand truths of the Reformation, but so that he that runneth may read,

[1] "Historical Introduction," p. 20, of *Tercentenary Edition of Heidelberg Catechism*, 1863.

[2] *Idem*, p. 21.

and the wayfaring men, though fools—*i. e.*, simple and unlearned—shall not err therein; something, in fact, that could go into the homes of peasants and princes alike, that would place words and thoughts at the disposal of men in such a way that in the field or market-place or castle or camp they might easily linger in the mind and produce sanctifying effects. This was the scope of the book of instruction which formed the subject of the elector's pious ponderings. How was that noble but difficult ideal to be realized?

The castle and the university together combined to construct the much-desired document. What the castle conceived the university was destined to execute. This ancient institution, founded in the Middle Ages, while the papacy was still supreme, had not escaped the influences of the movements that had been going on in the world around it. It was now no longer devoted to the papal religion. The gospel as taught by that Augustinian monk who had once dared to dispute with its theologians had soon after become its gospel, and later Frederick the Pious had called to its halls professors holding the views of the Reformed. To one of these, Zacharias Ursinus, together with the court-preacher, Caspar Olevianus, who had been professor there, the elector confided his wishes. He charged them, at the same time, with the composition of the book.

The result of their joint-labors was the catechism

that bears the name of Heidelberg, which is still honored as the sole symbol of the (German) Reformed Church in the United States, which is one of the standards of the (Dutch) Reformed Church in America and in Holland, and which all the ministers of these communions are required by the general constitution of the Church, and by every individual call issued to them by congregations, to expound at stated intervals from the pulpit. This same catechism has also been cordially adopted as expressive of her faith by the Presbyterian Church in this country. We cannot descant at length upon its character or excellence. We briefly note two points, however. One is that it proved to be all that the elector had contemplated. It was a complete exposition of the way of salvation, yet so plain that the unlearned could understand it with ease, so spiritual that the ripest Christian could rejoice and profit by its reading, so convenient for the memory that men could carry its words about with them in the busiest hours of life. Beginning with the closely-personal and deeply-searching question, "What is *thine* only comfort in life and death?" so, throughout, the appeal is constantly to the necessity of personal piety: "Whence knowest *thou thy* misery?"—"What believest *thou?*"—"How art *thou* righteous before God?" Further, when we read the answer to the first question (cited above) we touch upon the keynote of the entire book: "That I with body

and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me, that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation. And, therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him." Following up this fundamental and richly experimental expression of the Christian's faith and hope, the book goes on by questions and answers to develop this confession, to exhibit the several grounds of truth whereupon it is based. Yet even here it remains experimental, setting forth doctrines not so much in the dry light of intellect as with the warm fervor of the actual Christian experience of them. This has made the book the beloved companion of aged Christians as well as the textbook for children. This, too, disarmed opposition on account of doctrinal differences, and gave it a welcome reception among all phases of Christian belief. "It is one great merit of the Catechism that it is not offensively polemical or controversial in any direction. It is, of course, Protestant throughout, in opposition to Romanism, and Reformed, also, throughout, in opposition to Lutheranism; and it was not possible, as the world

then stood, that this opposition in both cases should not assert itself—indirectly, at least—in strong terms. But, looking at the matter now in the calm light of history, we have reason to be surprised, on the whole, that it is so free from provocation in this form. Even its antagonism to the Roman Catholic Church, if we except the unfortunate and somewhat apocryphal appendix to the eightieth question, is managed in a general spirit of moderation which it was by no means easy to maintain in the middle of the sixteenth century."[1]

In the second place, we note the reception it met with throughout all the Protestant world. Soon after its publication, in 1563, thousands were reading it throughout Germany and in Holland, France, England, Scotland, Bohemia. It was a book for the people and the people hailed it, and hence it became powerfully instrumental in extending the Reformed Church, for by it not only were souls instructed in heavenly things and led to salvation, but it also conveyed in most acceptable form the doctrines of the Reformed Confession as opposed to Lutheran, Romish, Anabaptist or Socinian tenets. Wherever it commended itself and its teachings were accepted, there the Reformed doctrines, the Reformed Church, gained a foothold among men. Even in Germany that Church extended its sway. The elector of Brandenburg, the precursor

[1] "Historical Introduction," etc., p. 72.

of the kings of Prussia and of the present emperor of Germany, threw open the doors of his dominions to the views which Luther could not endorse. But if in the land of Luther his name was too potent, and but few German principalities could refuse to remain Lutheran, the Reformed Church was widely extended through all the rest of Europe; for when we read of Protestantism in many of these other countries, it exists there as the Reformed Church of Holland, of France, of Scotland, of Switzerland, of Bohemia.

Among the palaces surrounding the courtyard of Heidelberg Castle, there is none of all those that bear the names of princes which is inscribed with the name of Frederick III.; but surely he reared for himself a more enduring monument when he caused to be written the Catechism of Heidelberg, for with it is to be for ever identified the rise of the Reformed Church. Thus the memories that cluster about this ancient city are intimately connected with the Reformed churches in the Fatherland, and through them with many of us in this country. If we love the Reformed Church in this broad sense and take pride in its history, "Heidelberg" is a sacred name to us; if we rejoice in the faith that our fathers held, and in which we have been instructed from earliest youth, Heidelberg is a place to which we shall eagerly direct our pilgrim steps.

CHAPTER III.

WESEL; OR, THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF HOLLAND.

I. The Political Situation.

WE remain still in Germany. Leaving Heidelberg, we follow the Neckar till it meets the Rhine. Soon after launching our imaginary bark upon the latter's rapid current we pass the city of Worms, where Luther spoke those memorable words, "Here I stand; I can do no otherwise. So help me, God! Amen." In one of the public squares may be seen a magnificent monument reared to the memory of Luther. On a lofty pedestal adorned with bas-reliefs and surrounded by allegorical figures in a sitting posture stands the statue of the great Reformer, of colossal proportions, wrapped in his professorial gown and holding in his hands the Bible. No less than six statues of lesser size stand upon separate pedestals about this central piece, representing colaborers of Luther in his reforming work.

After passing Worms we float again by fortified

cities and castled and vine-clad hills, through miles upon miles and hour after hour of the most ravishing scenery, till we see looming up in the distance once more the dizzy steeples and the grand proportions of the Cologne cathedral.

Now the Rhine loses all its enchantment. It flows between flat banks; castles, hills and beauteous cities or villages fail. Thus we reach Wesel. It lies, perhaps, a quarter of a mile away from the river, to the right, or east, of it. The still rapid waters do not rush along rocky shores that shoot sheer down to unknown depths below; they toy among shallows and dally in sandy holes and wind among unsightly flats on either bank. Lofty steeples, indeed, greet us from yonder little town, but they look out upon a wide expanse of almost level country, uninteresting and unattractive, except, perhaps, to the agriculturist. Wesel is no place that tourists stop at. It presents nothing of special renown; it has no scenery to commend it, and the most enthusiastic lover of the Rhine would rather not see it here, after Bingen and the Lorelei Rocks and Coblentz and the Seven Mountains. Why, then, did we go to Wesel? One can hardly fail to be drawn along with the great stream of European travel to Cologne or Heidelberg. We might have gone to these places without the remotest reference to the historic memories that there crowd upon the mind, but to Wesel we repaired only and entirely because of its histori-

cal associations with the Reformed Church in Holland and America.

In looking for evidences of the Church of God—the Church that is placed visibly upon the earth to accomplish God's purposes of salvation—the fact of organization is of supreme importance. This organization of the Church began when God called Abraham and his people and gave them forms of worship, and, above all, sacraments. So much importance attached to this fact of an organized existence that Jesus never cut himself loose from the Jewish Church, however degenerate it had become, however hostile to the real spirit of Judaism and to him, the incarnation of its spirit and the accomplishment of its purposes and promises. He attended to all its regulations; and when John the Baptist objected to performing upon him the rite of baptism—not an obligatory ceremony, but one expressive of an advanced religious feeling—he said that it was necessary thus "to fulfill all righteousness." In the same way the disciples, even after Pentecost, did not rudely secede from the Jewish Church, but did their earlier work beneath the shadow of its organization. It was the principle of life overcoming that of death which finally caused the Christian Church to reach a development and an existence entirely apart from the Jewish, becoming in the stead of the other, and with her own forms and organization, the true visible Church of God upon the earth. So, at the advent

of the Reformation, the visible Church was the Roman Catholic. Luther and his coadjutors had not at first the remotest idea of separating themselves from its communion; but when the corrupt Church would not be reformed and when she cast forth from her midst the advocates and adherents of a purer faith, then it behooved the latter to set about establishing the marks of a visible Church among themselves. They needed to realize among themselves an organized existence.

As early as 1519 the doctrines of the Reformation had come into the provinces of the Netherlands. The great German agitation could not remain unknown in a country bordering so closely upon Luther's home. But the Netherlands were just as close to France, and in some of the provinces—the Walloon—the language of France was the vernacular of the people. When, therefore, the sacramental controversy arose, both sides of the question had an equal chance of being propagated here. With the two views of the sacrament thus set side by side before them, it is not difficult to foresee to which party the clear-headed, practical Hollanders would give their adherence in the greatest numbers. The Reformed faith soon prevailed almost exclusively throughout the Dutch provinces.

Nevertheless, there was as yet no Reformed Church of Holland. Persecution and slaughter were being breathed out against the faithful, and

how, therefore, could the functions of a visible Church be carefully defined and exercised? Yet, in spite of their distressing circumstances, preaching went on with amazing success, and rapid was the multiplication of converts to the new faith; and as these numbers grew consolidation, organization, became more and more indispensable. Nor were attempts lacking. The movement began among the Calvinistic Walloon congregations in the Southern Netherlands. We are told that "these scattered Walloon congregations held irregular conventions—by some called synods—in the utmost secrecy." We have the records of some of them, although the information does not extend beyond the dates on which they were held. Three occurred in the year 1563—memorable, also, for the publication of the Heidelberg Catechism. On April 26 a convention met in one of the Walloon provinces. On July 24, and again on October 15, conferences of the persecuted churches met in Antwerp. These good though feeble beginnings were diligently followed up, and the successive years—1564, 1565 and 1566—were also distinguished by gatherings of representatives from the scattered congregations of the Reformed, who took their lives in their hands in traveling to such conventions and being present at them.

The convention held in 1566 was a very important one. It met in the city of Antwerp, the me-

tropolis of the Netherlands, in the month of May. To give an idea of the difficulties under which such assemblies came together, let it be observed that the members, as they came singly or in parties of two or three to the place of meeting, were expected to give a countersign ere they could be admitted to the house. The countersign for the assembly in question was *La Vigne* ("the Vineyard"). The object of this convention was distinctly and deliberately that of laying "the foundations of a regular church-association the members of which might be bound together most closely in the bonds of a general concord." Excellent foundations were indeed laid, to be rapidly succeeded by substantial building.

But political history and religious history are so closely interwoven during the early days of the Dutch republic that we must cast a few brief glances at secular events before we proceed. Nor will it be without profit thoroughly to understand the circumstances in the midst of which the Church-fathers found themselves as they were busy constructing the house of the Lord.

The synod, or convention, of Antwerp last mentioned was held, as we just saw, in May, 1566. In April—one month before—the memorable "Petition of the Nobles" had been presented to the regent Margaret at Brussels. These nobles, although belonging to the aristocratic class, had taken up the cause of popular rights against the irresponsible des-

potism of both the State and the Church. They could no longer stand by in silence and see the king of Spain—to whom had fallen by inheritance the sovereignty of the various Netherland provinces—overriding the constitution of the country. Although the vast majority of the nobility were staunch Catholics, they had become shocked and outraged at beholding the atrocities daily committed in the name of religion and of the Church. Accordingly, they sent a delegation of four hundred to Brussels with a petition appealing to the king to honor the privileges of the country and to exercise royal clemency and mercy toward the erring heretics. It was as this imposing delegation filed into the audience-hall in the presence of the regent that one of her councilors whispered in her ear, to allay her fears, "These men are nothing but beggars who wish to mend their broken fortunes." That bitter sneer gave the magic of a name to a party: "beggars" they were called in derision; "Beggars" they cheerfully adopted as a title of honor. "Beggars" and "patriots" became henceforth synonymous terms.

While the result of this petition was yet uncertain, while the answer of regent and king was still pending, the Synod of Antwerp met. The moral influence of such action on the part of the highest in the land, however, contributed no little to raise the spirits of the Reformed and to make them bolder in organizing concerted movements.

Yet even now they found it prudent to be very secret in their assembly, since, as we have already seen, admittance to the house was secured only by countersign.

There rested upon the leaders of the Reformation all the greater pressure to organize a Church because of another event which has made 1566 a never-to-be-forgotten year. This was the sudden popularity of field-preaching. Forbidden to hold worship in the churches of cities, incredible multitudes went out into the fields or among the sand-hills or upon the dykes beyond the city walls to hear the gospel dispensed to them in the open air. Though it was death to preach the doctrines of the Reformation and death to listen to such preaching, yet many brave men were found who hurried from city to city, holding their hearers spell-bound for hours every day as they unfolded the simple religion of Jesus free from the fetters of Romanism, while gatherings of five, ten—ay, sometimes twenty-five—thousand people of all classes and both sects freely risked their lives to hear them. What could be done with these myriads of hungering and thirsting souls unless an organized visible Church stood ready to receive, hold, instruct and edify them?

Nor have we yet reached the end of the list of memorable events that took place in the year 1566. The summer months of that year witnessed a veri-

table epidemic of violence, of uncontrollable devastation. Numbers such as the field-preachings saw gave consciousness of strength, and, fifty thousand martyrdoms having roused a resentment deep as the sea and mighty as its tempest-driven waves, what wonder that the masses were ready to rise at a signal and give vent to their frenzy? The objects of their wrath were not innocent men, women and children; they invaded no homes and desolated no hearths: they broke into the churches and demolished the emblems of superstition, hurled stone statues upon the pavements, broke relic-boxes to pieces, tore into shreds the garments of priests and the jeweled robes of Madonnas. From one end of the land to the other this storm burst forth; the sacking of churches and the breaking of images became the order of the day.

Most serious were the consequences of this senseless, though almost excusable, outbreak of hatred against a persecuting Church: it drove King Philip to a very fury of anger and resentment. Regent Margaret of Parma, who had been induced to grant some concessions in deference to the stand taken by the nobles and because of the overwhelming numbers who attended the field-preachings, became as rigorous as ever in carrying out the decrees against heretics. In the ranks of the confederated nobles, too, these outrages produced division, for they alienated many patriotic Catholics from the cause of civil

and religious liberty. To crown all, the king of Spain became convinced that the task of ruling these turbulent provinces was too much for a woman, and he prepared to send that monster of cruelty, the duke of Alva, to supersede Margaret in the regency of the provinces.

The duke of Alva came into the land with an army of veterans at his back in August of the year 1567. Immediately consternation reigned throughout the whole land. The loftiest rank and the most distinguished services proved no safeguard against the king's wrath. Count Egmond, who by two brilliant victories had laid proud France at the feet of Philip, and Count Hoorn, admiral of Holland, were seized and imprisoned. The prince of Orange was saved by nothing but his prudence and his political foresight, which taught him that the only way to regain the country's liberties was by levying troops on foreign soil and returning at the head of an army. Thus, in the beginning of 1568—the first year of the "Eighty Years' War"—invading armies were sent by him into the territories of the Netherlands at several points at once. But failure and disaster were still to try the hearts of the patriots and the Reformed Christians for many a year to come. Two of the expeditions proved utterly futile. One, conducted by the prince's brother, Louis of Nassau, gained, indeed, the first victory of the revolution, at Heiligerlee, in Groningen, on May 23, 1568, but it was bar-

ren of results for good and rich in results of misery and terror. It hastened the execution of about twenty prominent nobles, with Counts Egmond and Hoorn at their head, within less than a fortnight after the battle. Less than two months after this disastrous victory the memory of it was wiped out in the blood of thousands and by the utter defeat of Louis and the absolute annihilation of his army in the battle of Jemmingen, July 22, 1568.

The whole country now shook with fear and horror of the name, the power, the relentless cruelty, of Alva. Not a hand stirred in defence of hearth, home or religion; not a cent of tribute dared men forward to the aid of William of Orange. Yet was the father of his country not discouraged. Lavishing his own vast wealth, sacrificing his personal property, he still maintained an army of thirty thousand mercenaries in Germany. He crossed the Rhine, and on October 3, 1568, he astonished Alva and the world by a masterly fording of the deep and broad Maas without a single boat and in the face of a hostile shore. Now, indeed, the war had been carried into Africa; now he who had sought to stem the tide of oppression and persecution by the wisdom of his counsels and the moderation of statesmanship was upon the Netherland soil with an army to defy the servant of the king of Spain and to beat him back from the country where he had no right to rule.

But, alas! despotism mustered its forces and crushed again this presumptuous patriotism, as it had so easily done in the North. Alva, in the present instance, was as cautious as before he had been prompt to strike. He did not trust to the issue of a single battle. He knew that the mercenaries of the prince must fall away from him for lack of funds, and, avoiding every open encounter, he harassed and worried the diminishing forces of the invaders, until, on November 17, 1568, the last remnant of the liberating army recrossed the borders of the suffering land, having gained nothing. The patriotic prince was left in an utterly exhausted condition, ruined in finances, desperately in debt, altogether unable to muster another army for the support of his projects.

II. The Early Synods.

Thus Alva reigned once more in undisputed triumph. The iron heel of oppression was planted with more crushing force than ever upon the country's liberties, and hundreds of victims were daily led to the block, the gallows, the stake—were drowned or buried alive for the faith of the gospel. There was no escape from persecution but in death or in flight. Thousands fled the country and sought an asylum in other lands where they might worship God as he directed in his word.

It seemed hardly a time to be thinking of aught

but the saving of life. It would seem that God's people had little else before them but to devise means to keep alive an invisible Church secretly united in love and faith and the worship of the heart; yet they felt that even amid such a state of things a visible Church was needed for the comfort, the perfecting, the establishment, of the saints of God, scattered as they were, driven from home and country, hounded like wild beasts to violent deaths. No sooner, therefore, had the very fury of the persecutors secured to many a brief respite in a foreign land from the otherwise ever-present menace of death than it was utilized to mature measures looking toward the organization of the Church.

For several years the city of Wesel had been sought as a refuge by those who were driven from their own land for their adherence to the Reformation. As early as 1545 many fled to this place from England, and again in 1553, when Bloody Mary began her reign. When Alva came into the Low Countries and multitudes fled across the borders, a great number sought refuge in this city, so conveniently near. If we look at a map of the country of those days, we notice that Wesel lies within an angle formed by the Dutch territories. But a few miles to either the north or the west of it we enter Holland, while its situation on the banks of the Rhine made access easy. To illustrate how near it is by modern estimates, we may

say that we left Venlo, in Holland, with a noon train, had more than an hour to wander around the German city's streets, and were back again at our hotel in Venlo for a four-o'clock dinner.

Here, then, in this veritable "city of refuge," representatives of the persecuted and scattered churches came together in council. On November 3, 1568, or at the very time that the prince of Orange was retiring from the country with his diminished forces, a disappointed but not disheartened man, this first Synod of the Reformed churches of the Netherlands met, representing the congregations of twenty different localities. It was presided over by the noted Petrus Dathenus.

A worthy foundation had already been laid for Church organization by the adoption at the Antwerp Convention, in 1566, of the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. A basis of faith and doctrine was, above all things, necessary, but upon this it was just as necessary to build a visible superstructure; and that was done by the Synod after it had ratified the adoption of the two symbols above named. The four offices of which we read to-day in the constitution of the Reformed Church in America were here first distinguished and defined, and ordained to prevail in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. We are familiar with them—ministers of the word, teachers of theology, elders and deacons. To these were to be committed the

preaching of the gospel; through these the supply of men who should preach was to be maintained; by these the sacraments of the Church were to be both administered and guarded; while the temporalities of congregations were also provided for, so that means for the support of the gospel, the needs of the kingdom or the necessities of the poor might be secured and dispensed in the fear of God. Thus equipped, the Reformed Church could with eminent success maintain itself as a visible body even under persecution, while leading the souls of men, at the same time, to the unseen and the eternal by the propagation of a more evangelical faith and worship.

A few more touches were needed, however, before the ecclesiastical structure was quite complete. Three years pass by with no improvement in the condition of the Netherlands, and again a Synod meets outside their bounds, now at Embden, in the north of Germany, and just across a narrow bay from the province of Groningen. It was only a few miles distant from the fatal field of Jemmingen. Here the board of elders and deacons, with presiding minister, receives its name of "Consistory," and several neighboring churches are to be combined into "Classes."

Time now hurries on events that bring happier prospects for struggling patriots and Reformers. The Synod of Embden met on October 5, 1571; six months after, on April 1, 1572, the city and

seaport of Brille was wrenched from the tyrant's grasp and became the first stronghold of freedom. Stimulated by this success, a great number of cities in the northern provinces cast off the Spanish yoke and expelled the Spanish garrisons. This bright gleam of hope was, indeed, again swallowed up in a season of despair. Vengeance horrible and swift descended upon these brave cities in quick succession. Zutphen is depopulated in November of the same year; on December 1, Naarden is left without inhabitants, a mass of blackened ruins; on December 12, Haarlem is invested by an army of thirty thousand men. Here the duke of Alva, however, encounters his first check. It takes seven months to reduce this feeble town, and twelve thousand veterans are lying dead in the trenches, while famine, and not valor nor skill, conquers the patriotic citizens. On July, 10, 1573, Haarlem surrenders; in August the foe is before Alkmaar, a small city in the northernmost extremity of Holland. It does not surrender at demand. Nay, on October 8, Alva's son is fain to retire in haste, and abandons the siege; and "Victory begins at Alkmaar!" is the cry that rings throughout the land. On October 31 (1573), however the Spanish lay siege to Leyden, in the very heart of Holland. No relief can be sent. A diversion compels the enemy to retire for two months, from March to May, 1574, but on May 26 he is back again; and now began the sad but heroic

ordeal that has made Leyden famous, and which lasted from May to October, 1574.

In June of this same year, while Leyden was patiently resisting and suffering, a Synod of the Reformed Church of Holland first met on Dutch soil. The place of assembly was the city of Dordrecht, or Dort, and there were no churches represented except those located in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland; it has, therefore, been called a provincial Synod. The number of converts in these two small and tyrant-ridden territories must have been considerable, for this Synod constituted no less than fourteen Classes out of the churches within their bounds. Every Consistory was directed to procure a copy of the minutes of the Synod of Embden, and also of this provincial Synod itself. Its *acta* numbered ninety-one, and related to various matters.

Four years later, in the summer of 1578, a national or general Synod at last assembled within the borders of the nascent republic. This Synod, too, met in the city of Dort, destined to become still more famous in ecclesiastical annals. In a subsequent chapter we shall refer more particularly to some of its proceedings. We need only to observe just here that the Church of Holland had now practically attained autonomy and independent existence as a visible body, organized and equipped for effective work, and that this was only ten years after the

corner-stone for this complete upbuilding had been laid, in 1568, at the First General Synod, which met in the city of Wesel, on the Rhine.

Is it any wonder, then, that we had a strong desire to visit this city? Devoid of all else most sought, without far-famed cathedral or ruined palaces, without ravishing Rhine views or dizzy mountain-tops, it was sufficient for us that the memory of the first Synod and the beginning of church organization for the Reformed Church clung about this modest town. True, as we passed beneath the frowning "Berlin Gate" and penetrated within her formidable defences—for Wesel is now a strongly-fortified frontier town of warlike Prussia—we could discover no reminiscences of this ecclesiastical assembly. We beheld one great ungainly church with high square steeple and without transept, but we strongly suspected it was Catholic, though it may have been Lutheran. We saw another, vastly more ancient, which was in process of most thorough "restoration," both within and without, presenting the appearance of a fine but crumbling skeleton of Gothic architecture. We could hardly believe, however, that the fifty-three delegates to Wesel's Synod needed either of these edifices for their gathering, or that these would have been accorded them if they had been asked for. We wandered, therefore, through every part of the small city—numbering hardly ten thousand souls

—in search of something to remind us of the past. We noted with interest the by no means imposing dwelling-houses, and wondered what the occupants would have said if we had thanked them in the name of our ecclesiastical forefathers for harboring them so hospitably when death pursued them in their own land. At last we came upon a small, square church, with low belfry, and whose brick walls were black with age. We hoped that this might prove to be the place where met the venerable assembly the memory of which filled our thoughts. But, alas! the building bore the date of 1728, and thus our hopes were dashed to the ground.

Hence we departed, having laid no eyes upon the actual scene of the gathering. We had not time even to look up the memorial silver cups presented to the authorities in 1578 by grateful refugees on their return to their Fatherland. But, nevertheless, we were rejoiced that we had been permitted to enjoy the privilege of walking the streets of a city where these afflicted fathers of our faith found a safe asylum, and where they bravely and hopefully labored to build up by orderly construction the Church of the Fatherland when the hour of her existence was the darkest—ay, when that very existence was trembling in the balance.

CHAPTER IV.

LEYDEN; OR, THE PLACE OF LEARNING IN THE DUTCH CHURCH.

I. The Siege, and its Reward.

WE are now to study the Church of Holland from a point of view within Holland itself, but, even as at Cologne and Heidelberg and Wesel in Germany, we remain on or near the beautiful and historic Rhine. We transport ourselves in thought to the city of Leyden, through whose very heart flows a branch of the Rhine, distributing itself into a hundred channels or canals. Not far beyond this town the river empties itself by artificial means into the North Sea.

In almost the mathematical centre of the city there rises a huge artificial hill or mound. Green sward and ornamental bushes and lofty trees adorn its sides, along which winding asphalt paths conduct the visitor to the summit—perhaps fifty feet above the level of the streets. Here stands a curious relic of ancient times—a structure in the form of a perfectly circular wall of brick, about twenty feet high. Passing through a low archway, we find ourselves

in a circular court from seventy-five to one hundred feet in diameter, open to the sky and planted with trees. A brick stairway leads to a broad rampart running all around the outside wall and supported by arches constructed of large, old-fashioned bricks. A parapet surmounts this rampart, rising to a height of some six feet and pierced with wide embrasures or loopholes for the use of artillery. Authentic mention of this fortification is made as early as the tenth century, but it is supposed to date back farther still—to Hengist, Anglo-Saxon king, or even to the times of the Romans.

Whatever its antiquity, here it stands to-day, and here it stood during Leyden's dreadful siege in the summer of 1574. From its ramparts may be viewed all the surrounding city, and the country beyond for miles. We can here trace the two branches of the Rhine into which it divides on entering the city, coming from the east and meeting almost at the foot of the mound ; here we can see the canals crossing and recrossing one another, cutting the city into numberless islands connected by no less than one hundred and fifty bridges, nearly all of stone. Peeping from behind the trees that rise from the sides of the mound we can see steeples of distant cities—The Hague, Delft, Haarlem—and, between, the green meadows and straight canals and winding rivers and glassy ponds or lakes that fill up the landscape. No elevations break the view except

the faithful and patient dikes, holding and guiding the waters and guarding against inundation the bountiful harvests and the luxuriant pastures with their sleek and well-fed cattle.

This is the peaceful and prosperous scene that greets our eye as to-day we walk this lofty parapet. A quite different scene—a scene of violence and desolation—would have met our vision in the summer of 1574. Villages and harvest-fields were laid waste. Frowning forts and redoubts threatened the city and hurled the missiles of death from the gleaming cannon's mouth. Troops of the enemy marched and countermarched, and in yonder village of Leiderdorp, to the south-east, where the commander of the besieging forces had located his headquarters, the white-roofed tents of the invading Spaniards glared in the midday sun.

Within the city there were famine and fever, combining into a fearful partnership of woe and doing their unfailing work of death. Four long fall and winter months, and more than half of March, the enemy had been before the gates; then a brief respite of two months was followed by the resumption of the siege late in May. June, July, August passed away, and yet no relief had come, and hope had long departed from the hearts of the citizens; it was the strength of despair as well as the righteousness of their cause that supported them now. But theirs was a fearful trial:

the enemy had sat down before the city with the simple and deliberate intention of starving it to a surrender. There was no diversion of thought from misery by the action of battle or the glory of victory. The heroism of patient endurance—much harder than that of the exciting conflict—was needed here, and during this siege was magnificently illustrated.

Great results for disaster or for triumph to the cause of liberty hung upon the issue of this siege. It was the culmination of a series of military operations on the part of the Spaniards within the heart of Holland which had begun with the massacres at Zutphen and Naarden. The Spanish host of thirty thousand veterans was proceeding through the land on similar errands to every city that but thought of resistance. Amsterdam was loyal to Spain in that bad sense which means disloyalty to liberty and right. But at Haarlem, as we briefly noted in the preceding chapter, the army of Spain encountered its first real check, being held at bay for seven weary months, the final victory costing twelve thousand men; it was an experience too disastrous to be often repeated. But, advancing to the north, the city of Alkmaar made the army experience not only a virtual, but a real, defeat. Here victory began for Dutch freedom; the Spaniards were glad to withdraw in haste and leave their prey untouched. They now turned toward the south and sought to chastise

Leyden, but the miserable remnant of the original thirty thousand which was charged with this present duty—an army scarce eight thousand strong, and commanded, not by Alva's son, but by an inferior officer—showed that here must be the final struggle. If here the Spaniards should be successfully resisted until compelled to abandon the siege, they could hope to retain no footing in any part of Holland. So utterly enfeebled were these decimated provinces, impoverished as they were in men and money by countless executions, martyrdoms and confiscations, that no land-forces could be raised to drive even so small a force from before a city in their very centre; therefore upon the patience and endurance of the inhabitants hung the whole issue of this last attempt of the Spanish tyrant. Should they succumb and the Spaniards enter the gates of Leyden, increasing numbers of the enemy would pour across the borders of Holland, and every city would soon be invested by them and held for the crown of Spain. Did they endure unto the end, however—and that end the deliverance which their fellow-patriots could only slowly bring them, that end the discomfiture and departure of the Spaniards—the country would be saved, Liberty would raise her bleeding head and hope for better days and final victory would dawn once more. The devoted citizens of Leyden knew all this, and therefore amid every dire calamity they bravely persevered until September was nearly

added to the summer months that had been passed in such bitter anguish.

News has come at last that the dikes near Rotterdam have been pierced, and that the waters of the Maas are free to flood the country up to the gates of Leyden. At the same time, upon the advancing tide are floating two hundred boats with the ever-victorious patriot navy—the "Water-Beggars"—on board. Soon the booming of their cannon is heard. Nearer and nearer they approach as they wrest dike after dike from the Spaniard and pierce it for the passage of the waters. At last they can see the clouds of smoke rising above the scenes of battle; but the waters, spread over an ever-widening surface and receding ever farther from the river that supplies them, become too shallow for the boats of the relieving forces.

Fearful suspense now takes the place of the hope that had again begun to visit the citizens of Leyden. Now, daily, they resort in crowds to the ramparts of the ancient fortification and look and look, straining their utmost powers of vision to see if the waters are rising and whether their deliverers are coming. But wind and tide are still on the side of the Spaniard; for many days they look in vain. September numbers its last day, and still the city is in peril, still the famine and the fever mow down their human harvest in the streets.

Suddenly a change occurs: a north-west wind

comes, lashing the waters of the North Sea and piling them up on the coast of Holland. Another sudden change brings a tempest from the south-east. Now the accumulated ocean-waves are driven furiously back upon the waters of the Maas River; the floods rush through the mutilated dikes between Rotterdam and Schiedam, and up to the gates of Leyden they hurry, as if glad of the good work they do in bearing the brave Water-Beggars and their loads of provisions into the embrace of the famished citizens.

The Spaniards, having seen the waters coming and incapable of coping with such a foe, retired before them, abandoned the siege, and left the country.

It is October 3, 1574, and Leyden is delivered. But Leyden, remaining firm until it *could* be delivered, had secured the deliverance of Holland, had broken the yoke of Spanish dominion, had laid the first permanent foundations for Dutch liberty and independence.

Supreme had been the services rendered by the brave city to the cause of the republic, and supreme was the reward she merited. The prince of Orange, therefore, gave her the choice between two great favors—the remission of certain taxes, combined with some other pecuniary advantages, or the establishment of a university in her midst. The citizens who had so nobly conducted themselves in defence of their rights now made choice of the nobler of these two

privileges: they chose to have the university. Accordingly, certain funds and properties and buildings were set apart for this purpose by authority of the prince, and the University of Leyden was duly inaugurated in February, 1575, four months after the deliverance of the city from the power of Spain.

II. The Universities of Holland.

Thus had been taken the first step in the cause of learning under the auspices of the Reformed Church in Holland. This Church was even yet but feeling its way toward organization and existence. Only in June of the previous year (1574), while the siege was still pressing Leyden, the first synodical assembly that the Church had dared to hold in its own country had gathered (as we noticed in the preceding chapter) in the city of Dort. This was, moreover, it is interesting to observe, the first university founded after the Reformation, and by Protestants as such. Some of the European universities, indeed, arising during the supremacy of the Romish Church, had undergone a change in their religious complexion when Protestantism grew to prevalence in the territories where they were located. This was the case with the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, in England; so, in Germany, Heidelberg, the earliest of her universities, was now a Protestant institution, and Wittenberg,

where Luther held a professorship, founded but a few years before the Reformation, had, of course, participated in the change of affairs brought about by the courage and the labors of its most distinguished instructor. But Leyden was founded when the Reformation had become an established fact, although liberty of conscience had but barely gained some hope of a permanent foothold in the Dutch provinces. From the beginning it was a Protestant university—the first that was the direct outgrowth and the undeniable proof of the regard for learning which existed among the new religionists, as well as the first of Holland.

But it did not long remain alone. Up in the province of Friesland there is a quaint little town with narrow canals crossed by toylike bridges. It is environed by dismantled earthworks that afford an elevated position both for viewing the place itself and for surveying the limitless expanse of level country around it. This town is called Franeker, and here, in 1586, eleven years after the founding of Leyden University, a second university was established within the Fatherland, although war was yet fiercely raging and the land had hardly recovered from the terrible disaster of the assassination of William of Orange, two years before. Interesting as are the mementos of it still to be found at the town-hall, the University of Franeker exists no longer. In 1811 it was abolished by order of

Napoleon I., emperor of France, of which empire Holland then formed a part.

We travel due eastward, and enter the province and city of Groningen. Here, in 1614, while the Eighty Years' War was still in progress—although just then it was interrupted in its active operations by the "Twelve Years' Truce"—in 1614, when the hot disputes between Calvinism and Arminianism were raging, culminating, four years later, in the great Synod of Dort,—at this exciting period another university was founded. This institution is still in existence. It occupies imposing buildings that exceed in beauty of architecture any of the numerous buildings occupied by the various departments at Leyden. And most appropriate it was that Groningen, the birthplace of Wessel Gansvoort, the greatest scholar of his age and one of the most advanced of the ante-Reformers, from whom even Luther could learn a lesson,—most appropriate was it that this city should have become the seat of an institution consecrated to learning under the auspices of Protestantism.

Nor yet is the list of Dutch universities complete. The republic had not yet finally achieved its independence, the Eighty Years' War was still to continue twelve years longer, when, in 1636, the University of Utrecht was established—contemporaneously, therefore, with our own Harvard. And surely the Dutch Reformed Church in this country

should be interested in this institution, for the University of Utrecht may be regarded as in a manner the *alma mater*—the mother—of the educational institutions of the American denomination, since here, in 1770, was graduated John H. Livingston, who was their first professor of theology and the first president of Rutgers College when it began to assume definite and permanent shape as the college of their Church.

The most prominent object in Utrecht is the tall cathedral-tower. In 1674 a violent hurricane demolished and leveled the part of the cathedral between the tower and the transept. Beautiful vaulted cloisters in ancient Gothic style, surrrounding a square open court, connect what remains of the church and the university buildings. In this quiet quadrangle, sacred to meditation and to study, no doubt the godly Livingston frequently walked and prayed and thought how he might heal the differences that then distracted the Church in America, and of which eventually he achieved the peaceful settlement.[1]

From the mere enumeration of these several universities, springing up one after another before the Eighty Years' War for independence was at an end, we may easily gather what place learning occupied in the estimation of the Reformed Church of Holland. It was a place most prominent—a place of

[1] Part I., Chap. VI.

conspicuous honor, a place which indicated the supreme importance our forefathers attached to learning, education, thorough training. They believed with Paul that the man of God should be complete, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. It is true all branches of learning—the secular professions and the investigations of science—were pursued in each of these universities with an illustrious degree of success, but theology in those days was the "queen of the sciences," and that first of all was the object aimed at in establishing these schools. At the first breathing-space in the hot race of persecution the Church secured to itself a stronghold where men might be furnished with every weapon to defend and to extend the word of God.

It is interesting also to note what part these several universities have played in the history of the Church of Holland. At Leyden, Arminius taught those doctrines which sought to smooth the sharp edges and the offensive corners of an uncompromising Calvinism. Here, too, his chief opponent, Gomarus, taught and began that battle against Arminius which had its triumphant close in the famous Synod of Dort.

The University of Franeker became identified with another great name in the history of doctrine. In the year 1656, John Cocceius was called to its chair of biblical languages. His name stands connected not only with a new and fruitful principle

of Bible interpretation, seeking for light upon the Scriptures from the Scriptures themselves, but he also became the originator of the famous "federal theology," representing Christ as the federal head of the redeemed, as Adam was of fallen humanity, and contrasting the covenant of works with the covenant of grace. This theory, or "theology," won considerable acceptance in the learned religious world, and students crowded the professor's class-rooms. It has been much misunderstood in later times, but yet many earnest thinking men to-day find that it affords great help in the study and apprehension of the plan of salvation.

Groningen University has become known for a less happy development of Church history, giving its name to a school distinguished for hostility to the vital evangelical doctrines in regard to sin, the tendency of the "Groningen" teachings being to make sin less radical—*i. e.* less *sinful*—thereby lessening men's conceptions of the power and necessity of the satisfaction of Christ. If Groningen opened the flood-gates of rationalism, it was not long alone in encouraging and fostering the growth of these ideas; for Leyden soon fell into line, and has been steadily advancing upon this questionable career. The University of Utrecht, however, has always been the stronghold of orthodoxy, the defender and upholder of the word of God's truth. It was for this reason that Dr. Livingston selected this university, and

its influence for orthodoxy has pervaded the American Church till to-day; and in the present time, while so many are forsaking the old foundations, it stands firm on the side of truth.

There is one canal that conducts its waters through Leyden in a long semicircle. A broad street is on either side of it, and a row of fine, flourishing shade trees stands upon each bank. The elegant or plainly-dignified residences of the better class of citizens grace this "canal street" on both sides, their continuous line being broken occasionally by the large edifices devoted to different departments of the university. Here and there a graceful stone bridge spans the peaceful and silvery waters, connecting the opposite sides of the street itself and allowing a thoroughfare for cross-streets. One of these bridges let us note particularly. It crosses the canal just opposite a narrow street. A few steps from the corner is a house marked by a large stone in its front wall bearing the inscription: "On this spot lived, taught and died John Robinson, 1611–1625." Passing this interesting memorial of the pastor of the Puritan flock on our way to the canal street, and going over the bridge just mentioned, we come upon a building that looks like a church. It is not like one of those enormous and overgrown edifices we continually meet with in Holland, but is very much of the size and shape of the churches we are accustomed to see in this country. It was originally

the chapel of the convent of St. Barbara, but was converted to the uses of the university after the siege, in 1574. It was then the only university building; and although at present other halls in different parts of the city are employed for the uses of various departments, yet this St. Barbara chapel is still the centre of academic interest, for here the examinations are held and university honors are here contended for.

As, then, we stood by the side of this historic edifice, so well calculated to lead back our thoughts to the heroic days of the past, it was with a feeling of sadness that we reflected that the Leyden University has now for years been identified only with the opponents of evangelical truth. The man who is leading a formidable host of scholars in Germany, Scotland, America in low views of Scripture interpretation, who severs Moses from the authorship of the books which go by his name, and who sees in the "Prophets" only a collection of impositions written after the events predicted and foisted upon the world as if composed before—who in this way goes through the Holy Book, upsetting the supernatural and leaving no solid ground for confidence in any of its teachings,—this man is Professor Kuenen, of the University of Leyden.

We could not but ask ourselves, with our eyes upon this building and our mind upon its associations with the past, Had citizens of this de-

voted town been filled with ideas about the Bible such as are now being disseminated from this university, had they held loosely to the teachings of truth therein contained, hardly knowing which of them came from God and which from men, could or would they have stood as they did in their hour of trial? Would those men and women have cheerfully sunk down upon their fever-stricken beds day after day, their bodies wasted and destroyed by the pestilence, would they have fearlessly waited for the coming of that last awful and inevitable moment when life, unsupported by food, must refuse to continue, when famine should have done its worst,—would they have so manfully endured this all for religious liberty and the civil independence that alone could secure them in their service of God according to the dictates of their conscience, if they had doubted that there was a God of hosts who in the times of Israel's distress fought with and for his people the battles of the truth and right? Did they not strengthen their hearts and confirm their courage by the reading of those very pages of Holy Writ whose ringing words modern theologies are laboring diligently to emasculate and bring to naught? It was the Bible in all its worth and power which made the people of Leyden endure unto the end. It was the Bible—its strong, heart-satisfying, character-building truths—which laid strong and deep the foundations of the Dutch republic and of the

Dutch Church. And it is the Bible—not explained away, not mended here and bolstered up there and softened down yonder, but the Bible in its power of truth and godliness—which must be the stay, as it has been the corner-stone, of *our* republic. That which made heroes of the men of old is the only salvation for this great nation.

CHAPTER V.

DORDRECHT; OR, THE GREAT SYNOD.

I. Preliminary Events.

"PICTURESQUE DORDRECHT!" This seems to be the expression which most naturally comes to the lips of the delighted tourist who has made the rounds of this antique town. Says a recent writer on Holland, "For all the combined good qualities of a fine old Netherlandish town, such as churches, houses, shipping, people and country round about, I should say that Dordrecht would take the medal."

To our mind, the most attractive spot in all this picturesque Dordrecht was the street or quay known as the "Groot-Hoofd." Standing here upon the river's bank, one sees sweeping toward him from the east the broad stream called the "Merwede," formed by the junction of the Maas and the Waal, of which the latter is really the undiminished Rhine itself under another name. Immediately opposite our place of observation this wide river divides into two branches only very little narrower than the par-

ent stream. The one turns abruptly to the north to meet another branch of the Rhine a dozen miles below, and then flows westward past Rotterdam. Where we stand we look directly down this northern fork, while to our left the other makes a gentle bend to the south-west, passing beneath a noble railroad-bridge on its way toward the sea, meandering among islands large and small before it reaches its destination.

Dort, seated at the junction of these three rivers, has always held a front rank among the thriving municipalities of the Netherlands. It possesses a high antiquity. Almost a millennium ago Dordrecht was already a town—then, indeed, the capital of Holland. In the latter part of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century—that is, about nine hundred years ago—the first sturdy count of Holland planted himself upon this little corner, the centre of this magnificent river-system, and defied the world to dislodge him. The bishop of Utrecht tried, but he feared the prelate's soldiers as little as he feared his anathemas. The emperor of Germany was fain to recognize the brave vassal who had carved out a new country for himself, and Dirk I. held his own in his city of Dordrecht, and exacted tribute from all those who would use these ample streams as the highways of profitable trade. In Dort, accordingly, we find ourselves in the oldest of all the towns of Holland province.

Facing the river, and giving access from within the city to the quay of the "Groot-Hoofd," already mentioned, stands the only remaining town-gate that is preserved as a reminder of the past. It is one of the most interesting and curious structures of this kind in Holland. Its square brick façade is ornamented with all manner of quaint sculptures in white stone—heads of men and women, arms of cities and shields of guilds with names attached, full-sized lions, medallion-pieces and inscribed tablets. Surmounting this façade there rises a broad octagonal tower covered with a domelike roof terminating in an open clock-turret. But the most interesting thing about this curious town-gate, to us, was the date of construction which it bore upon its front. This read "*Anno 1618*"—the very year made memorable by the assembling of the great Synod of Dort.

We have made mention in a previous chapter of the two Synods held in Dordrecht before this date—the one a provincial Synod, held in 1574, representing churches in Holland and Zeeland only; the other held in 1578, and a national Synod, representing the Reformed churches of all the Dutch provinces.

In this Synod of 1578 the government, the worship and the faith of the Reformed Church of Holland had been marked out with considerable definiteness. The character and scope of the church

courts—Consistory, Classis, Provincial and National Synods—were now fixed. Not only the manner of their composition, but also their modes of procedure in ecclesiastical business, and even their times of meeting, were all determined. It was ordained that Consistories should keep a book of minutes and a record of membership, marriages and baptisms. Classes were to meet every six weeks, and at every meeting the president was required to ask several questions regarding the duties of preaching and pastoral visiting and the support of the minister. Provincial Synods were to assemble annually, and the National, or General, Synod only once in three years. Accordingly, the next General Synod met in Middelburg in 1581; but the next after that did not meet till 1586 (at The Hague), and after The Hague Synod no National Synod assembled till the famous one at Dort, in 1618.

The Synod of 1578 legislated, in the second place, in regard to the worship of the Church, forms being prescribed for use on various occasions. Those fitting and instructive words which are put into the mouth of the ministers of the Reformed Church in Holland and America to-day when they bury the dead or baptize infants or administer the communion of the Lord's Supper were then adopted officially, and with the modification of 1619 have marked the worship of their congregations through more than two centuries and in both hemispheres.

Lastly, at this first National Synod measures were also taken to secure a faithful, undeviating adherence to the distinctive doctrines of the Reformed faith. The Church then possessed two of the three principal doctrinal documents or symbols which distinguish it to-day. These were the "Heidelberg Catechism," and the "Belgic Confession of Faith" in thirty-seven articles. For fear that there might arise a looseness in doctrine or a departure from the lines of truth here laid down, not only the ministers of the gospel and the professors of theology, but the elders of the churches, were required to affix their signature to these articles, and later, by the Synod at Middelburg, in 1581, it was ordained that school-teachers should do the same.

But even in those early days it proved impossible to bind the thoughts of men. These carefully-drawn lines and stringent measures did not prevent their straying beyond the limits of a definite creed. At this very first National Synod the occasion for strict requirements had grown out of the fact that some ministers of the gospel "had expressed the opinion that they were not bound by the Confession of Faith, but had a right to depart from it," particularly in the matter of the articles on election and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. At the next National Synod, held at Middelburg in 1581, the question of subscription had to be brought up again. "As indicative, perhaps, of a secret hos-

tility to the acts requiring such signature, if not to the Confession itself, is the fact that some ministers present at this Synod appeared to know nothing about this symbol, exclaiming, 'What confession of thirty-seven articles is this?'"[1]

These are significant circumstances, and they were the prophecies of great events and distressing controversies in the future. As years went on one after another voice with more or less of power or influence was raised against the form of doctrine adopted as the creed of the Reformed Church. At last we come upon the name of Arminius. He was one of the pastors of the church of Amsterdam, celebrated for his learning and eloquence. The Consistory having encountered some persons who had difficulties in accepting the Catechism, they referred these difficulties to Arminius for a solution, that these parties might be reconciled to the document and be led to a hearty acceptance before being received as members.

To his surprise, Arminius found that he could not solve the difficulties submitted to him, inasmuch as they expressed exactly the objections to Calvinism that had arisen in his own mind. He frankly admitted this state of things. But this brought him into great trouble, as he was made the object of several fierce attacks on the part of his colleagues in the pastorate at Amsterdam. The name of Ar-

[1] Hansen's *Reformed Church in Netherlands*, pp. 96, 102.

minius was brought into no little prominence throughout the country. By the intervention of friends on both sides, however, matters were readjusted. The distraction which had momentarily reigned was allayed, and peace once more prevailed within the church of the metropolis.

II. The Synod in Session.

When the Netherland nobles met in Brussels to form the league under whose auspices the famous "petition" was framed and presented, Franciscus Junius, a youthful clergyman who was a converted priest, was invited to preach a sermon before them. He did so, and delivered an eloquent discourse with great equanimity, although the fires of an execution at the stake threw lurid flashes through the windows of the hall where the assembly met. This same young preacher comes prominently into notice again in connection with the celebrated convention of Walloon Reformed churches which met in Antwerp in 1566, and of which we have made proper mention in a former chapter. This great and brave Reformer and learned theologian was chosen by the authorities of the University of Leyden to be the first incumbent of the chair of theology.

Franciscus Junius died in 1602, and Arminius of Amsterdam was chosen as his successor, becoming thus the second incumbent of this important chair in the land's most famous university.

Arminius, as professor of theology, extended and developed the views opposed to Calvinism which had so conspicuously come to the foreground in the exercise of his humbler pastoral duties. It was not long before a murmur of discontent was heard from one end of the country to the other. But, while some complained, others applauded; in fact, the whole population became divided upon the questions raised in the professor's class-room, and fierce controversies raged around almost every hearth. Representations and counter-statements, complaints and recriminations, were carried up into the highest parliament of the nation. Public disputations, commanded by the States-General in the hope of settling these abstract causes of strife, did not mend matters in the least. In these, Arminius and his supporters were confronted with the foremost theological lights on the other side, who were led by Gomarus, a colleague of Arminius in the theological faculty at Leyden. The whole country was fast getting ripe for that internecine conflict which was almost a warfare, which was to array brethren in Christ and fellow-patriots still struggling for independence in bitter hostility against one another. But ere the controversy had begun to rage at its hottest the person who had originated it on theological grounds had passed away from the earth. Arminius, still a young man, died in October, 1609.

Meantime, affairs had been rapidly and favorably

progressing in the political history of Holland. The "Union of Utrecht," a compact signed on January 29, 1579, or six months after the Synod of 1578, had given a constitution to the northern provinces and welded them into a single republic. In 1581 the final step in the march to independence had been taken, the sovereignty of Philip II. of Spain having been abjured and the republic assuming technically what it had long done practically, the grave responsibilities of a sovereign state—a matter of immense magnitude in the sixteenth century, when the traditions of feudalism had still so strong a hold upon men's imaginations throughout all Europe. After passing bravely through the awful calamity of the assassination of William the Silent, in 1584, the United Provinces had conducted the war for independence with such growing success, and had, at the same time, enjoyed such an astonishing commercial prosperity at the expense of the enemy, that Spain began to long for the cessation of a war which was woefully impoverishing her, while it was making the rebels stronger and richer every year. Hence, in 1609 a truce was agreed upon by the two belligerents which was to continue for twelve years.

To the theological controversy already raging was now added a political conflict. Prince Maurice, the son of the assassinated William of Orange, commander-in-chief of the republican armies, a brilliant and

successful soldier, had not favored the armistice; John of Barneveld, an astute statesman, had succeeded in effecting it. In certain questions of authority that arose, the provincial estates, or legislatures, disputed powers claimed by the States-General, the central legislature or congress of the nation. It was the conflict between federal government, and States' rights. John of Barneveld led the party of State sovereignty; Prince Maurice took sides, naturally, with the claims of the central government. As if these combats did not promise sufficient bitterness on either theological or political grounds alone, the two controversies soon became blended into one, and all the acrimony of the one but intensified that of the other.

At length men began to wrestle and try their strength with regard to one prime question—the assembling of a General Synod which should give an official deliverance regarding the views of Arminius. The professor had claimed that they were consistent with a true interpretation of Calvinism, and, indeed, read in the calm light of the present day, they seem but a modification of a stricter Calvinism, and are far more Calvinistic than the Arminianism of to-day. The first one to mention the expediency or necessity of such a Synod had been Arminius himself. The Calvinists long strenuously opposed it, but at length the latter began to advocate such an assembly; and now the Arminians sought by every means

to prevent its gathering. The Calvinists, however, prevailed, and the Synod was appointed to meet in the city of Dort in November of the year 1618.

On Tuesday, November 13, this great and august body commenced its sessions. It was more than a Synod: it was rather an œcumenical council of the Reformed churches of Europe, such as we have seen gathered within recent years at Philadelphia or Belfast. But happily in those days there was greater liberality in the English Church than now, for five representatives of that Church, with the bishop of Llandaff at their head, were commissioned by King James I. to attend this Synod. Besides these English delegates, there were theologians from Germany, Switzerland, the Southern Netherlands. Fifteen laymen sat with the Synod as deputies of the States-General of the republic, voting like regular members. The delegates, lay and clerical, from the Reformed Church of the United Provinces numbered about forty, while the professors of theology of the universities of Leyden, Franeker and Groningen were also members of the Synod. Bogerman, pastor at Leeuwarden, Friesland, a province where the agitations had not been so bitter as in the other parts of the country, was for this reason, as well as for his personal qualities, chosen president.

The deliberations of the Synod were conducted through a period of no less than six months. The Arminians were occasionally brought upon the floor,

but stormy scenes usually ensued when this took place. They claimed that they had a right to sit and deliberate as members with the others; Synod claimed that they must be cited as offenders and were on trial for heterodoxy. In reply to this the Arminians objected that the Synod could not be a fair judge in such a trial, as they were themselves a party in the case. At last this dispute was summarily cut short by the Synod in refusing to treat with the Arminians personally at all. It was resolved to expel them from the assembly. With violent gesticulation, and no less violent language, President Bogerman accordingly, on January 14, 1619, showed them the door.

The Arminian doctrines were now taken up as gathered from various publications. Foremost among these was a remonstrance expressing the views which they had addressed to the States-General a few years previously. The teachings of Arminius were condemned in detail, and in their place were reiterated and emphasized the doctrines of Calvinism. The document containing these deliverances of the Synod, which goes by the name of the "Canons of Dort," is an important symbol of the Reformed Church in Holland and in America This is the latest of the three doctrinal books upon which these churches found their denominational distinctiveness. In general aim and purport not differing from the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Con-

fession, before adopted, it intensifies the doctrinal features therein contained, making more unmistakable the clear outlines of a Calvinistic theology.

When this exhaustive statement of their own views and the condemnation of the Arminians had been arrived at, the work in which the foreign delegates had been invited to participate was done, and on May 9, 1619, these took their leave and departed for their several homes. The Dutch delegates, however, remained in session for more than two weeks longer. They deliberated during that period upon matters of immediate interest only to the Church of Holland —such, namely, as pertained to government and discipline, to customs and usages affecting the conduct of ordinary worship and the observance of Church festivals, and to the liturgy to be employed in the administration of the sacraments. A certain collection of versified psalms was ordered to be used in the churches, to the exclusion of all others. Action was taken also in regard to procuring an authorized translation of the Bible into the Dutch language.

III. Adjournment.

When we found ourselves actually upon the streets of Dort, we eagerly inquired after the location of the building where the great Synod had held its sessions. History makes us acquainted with the fact that these were held in the "City Doelen." This was an institution found in almost every Dutch

town of importance, being, as we would call it, the armory for the town militia.

In a room in the town-hall of Dort there hangs a painting of the famous assembly during one of its business sessions in this *Doelen*. We look upon a spacious hall well lighted by six tall and broad stained-glass windows. At the farther end there is a huge chimney with a lusty fire blazing upon the hearth. Directly in front of this, at a suitable distance, is represented the president's table. Bogerman, conspicuous for his lofty and robust frame and long, flowing beard, is standing; the two assessors, or vice-presidents, are seated, one on either hand, and at each side of the table a scribe, or clerk, is busy at his work. A long table at right angles to the former occupies the centre of the apartment; we are told that the arraigned Arminian professors and ministers were here assigned their seats. Running along the walls on both sides and beneath the windows are pews, an inclined board on the partition in front of each bench serving as a desk to the occupants and being provided with inkstands. Several rows of pews near the entrance are arranged at right angles to the others, a broad aisle between them giving access to the middle of the room. A key to the painting informs the spectator where the several delegations representing the States-General, the various provinces and the foreign countries were seated during the Synod. All the members have their hats

on except the president and one or two members who are standing or walking across the floor. A wooden partition, breast-high, shuts off a sort of lobby for the general public, apparently affording standing-room for but few.

Having looked upon this representation of the Synod in session, our desire became stronger to stand in that very hall and thus vividly bring before us all its potent memories. On inquiry, the attendant at the town-hall told us its location, but added that the *Doelen* was now used as a prison for female offenders. This did not discourage us, however, for we expected to find this assembly-room preserved inviolate in honor of an event of such great importance and profound interest to the Church of Holland. We succeeded in finding the building. It stood in a very narrow street, a block or two from one of the main thoroughfares of the city, not far from the church (and the buildings formerly utilized as the monastery) of St. Augustin. On ringing the bell we were barely admitted inside the front door, all further access to the interior being jealously denied us. Of such a thing as an audience-hall the keepers of the prison knew nothing, the internal arrangements having undergone a radical change throughout in being made to serve the present dismal purposes. What a thought! The space that reverberated with the learned and earnest deliberations of this august body for so long

a time now divided up into tiers of cells! Still, we consoled ourselves with the fact that we had at least marked the exact site of the edifice within whose walls assembled the great Synod of Dort.

But, fortunately, there is another building in Dort which will bring to mind memories of the Synod, and which is yet intact. This is the "great," or cathedral, church. On the morning of the opening day, Tuesday, November 13, 1618, the whole body of the delegates assembled in this church and a vast multitude filled its ample space. An address of welcome was delivered by one of the pastors of the city, after which a sermon was preached by the pastor of the French church of Middelburg.

The Synod in a body met in the great church a second time on May 6, 1619. The occasion was an impressive one. The Arminian doctrines had now been finally condemned and a sentence had been formulated against the adherents of them. At this time, too, the "Canons of Dort" had been prepared. A solemn convocation of the people was made and this date widely announced for the public reading of these documents. Accordingly, they were read before the assembled Synod and a great concourse of people.

The third occasion was a farewell service. On Wednesday, May 25, 1619, at eight o'clock in the morning, the Synod, composed now of only the home delegates, gathered in their accustomed place,

where one hundred and eighty business sessions had been held. A short prayer was offered, and then the members left the hall, headed by the political deputies. On leaving the narrow street on which the *Doelen* was situated a walk of a block or two brought them into the principal business street of Dordrecht. This is not very wide, and winds, with one or two slight curves, through the place from one end to the other. An easy march of perhaps ten minutes brought them to a street at right angles to the former and leading across a canal. But a few steps now took them to the town-hall, built partly over this canal. Here the procession was joined by the mayor and the common council. Another short march along a prominent thoroughfare parallel to the other, but on the opposite side of the canal, brought within view the noble proportions of the cathedral. Soon the imposing procession defiled upon the broad square to the east of the church, where access to it is gained through the portal of the east transept. The vast throngs awaiting their arrival here opened a passage through their midst and then closed behind them, and, pouring into the great edifice, filled it to the full extent of its ample capacity. The preacher who had given the address of welcome now preached the farewell sermon. So, amid these solemn and impressive circumstances, the Synod of Dort adjourned, its members separated, and the curtain fell upon this tremendous drama in the strange

Dordrecht; Harbor and Cathedral or "Great" Church. Page 108.

and eventful history of the Reformed Church of Holland.

Full of these thrilling recollections, we wended our footsteps on a Sabbath morning to attend service in the great church. We left our hotel, situated almost on the river's edge, upon the "Groot-Hoofd" quay already mentioned. Following the quays along the Maas, on the outer border of the city, we came at length upon a wide square basin or bay retreating suddenly from the river-line. Facing this, with but a few houses intervening, so that its hoary front is reflected by the waters, stands the venerable cathedral of Dort. It was dedicated in the year 1339, and is one of the largest and finest of these structures to be found in Holland. Its square, massive, lofty tower, visible for several miles from the surrounding country, is crowned by no tapering spiral and leans perceptibly to one side. Within may be seen many things of interest from an historic and artistic view.

During the preliminary exercises, as the pealing organ lifted the praises of the people heavenward, the thought remained uppermost that we were seated in the church where the great Synod of Dort had actually assembled on three important occasions. From these wanderings we recalled our mind in proper season to give attention to the preacher, but before he had proceeded very far we became conscious of an exceeding great surprise. We were

fully aware that in the pulpits of the Established Church of Holland, although founded upon a creed of the strictest orthodoxy, there frequently stood men who preached a mutilated gospel in direct contravention of their ministerial vows and personal subscription, but we had not hitherto heard any of these. Now, at Dort—of all places!—we met with this experience, and that in the very church where the famous Synod had more than once assembled. Here, where this Synod had been welcomed, where words of commendation and farewell had been addressed to them, where the blessing of God had been invoked upon their work—a work which it was hoped would for ever after prevent departures from the faith,—here that work was contemned and a visible and audible evidence given of a sadder departure from the faith than ever Arminius contemplated. In the very pulpit whence the Canons of Dort had first been made public, read in the hearing of an approving multitude, creed-making was ridiculed and these expressions of doctrine were put to an open shame. In fact, the preacher went so far as to apologize for taking a text from the Bible, saying that he wished Christian usage would permit him to base his discourse on some sentiment from a classic writer.

The contrast was striking and painful, but it was also suggestive. Creeds are necessary—they have accomplished great good in the history of the Church

of Christ, God has blessed them to the upbuilding of his Zion—but they are human instruments, after all. They cannot achieve fully even that which they are most earnestly intended to achieve: they cannot exclude the seeds of error, and they cannot prevent their springing up within the hearts or minds of men. Even in the country where the Synod of Dort met, even in the church which the Canons of Dort provided with strict and careful safeguards against heterodoxy, rationalism is abroad and has its preachers. To some of the consequences of this fact we shall direct attention in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

FLUSHING; OR, PARENT AND DAUGHTER CHURCHES.

I. The First English Pastor.

THE province of Zeeland, kingdom of the Netherlands, is a curiosity. Its name signifies "sea-land," a contradiction in terms, and yet no misnomer, inasmuch as much of what was once sea is now land and that which is land may at any time change places again with the sea. To appreciate the make-up or topography of such a province as Zeeland, it is obvious from a single glance at the map that it must be traversed *per* steamer, and not by railroad or any land-route whatever. Accordingly, we took the steamer for Middelburg, the capital, at Rotterdam, and for ten hours of a summer's day wound among its numerous islands and ploughed through the waters of its countless rivers, estuaries and canals. Middelburg is situated at about the centre of the little island of Walcheren, whose western shores front on the German Ocean, presenting a marvelous array of sea-dikes to keep back the daily tides and the tempestuous waves.

The city of Flushing (*Vlissingen* in Dutch) is situated a few miles to the south of Middelburg, on the same island, where its coast-line follows the vast embouchure of the Scheldt River as it opens into the sea. From its position—almost on the sea, and yet sheltered from its direct attacks, and at one extremity of the country—it has always been a place of great strategic importance in times of war. The effects of its latest appearance in military annals are still visible. In 1809, when Napoleon ruled Holland, an English fleet under Lord Chatham bombarded the town almost to pieces. Large vacant spaces still stare at the visitor where the ravages of war leveled whole blocks of houses, for the subsequent long-continued season of peace has not sufficed to rebuild them. There is scarcely a harbor in Holland possessed of more splendid and spacious basins. But there is not enough traffic to fill them with shipping, and sad it is to see them in their desolate emptiness. A little steamer plying back and forth from point to point in the city does the work of a horse-car line, and makes but the more ghastly the lack of larger vessels engaged in a more serious and profitable business. Yet twice a day there is a great stir in this harbor. Flushing is a favorite point with English tourists to begin their continental travels. In the early morning a steamer arrives from Queensborough laden with passengers, who are distributed *per* rail to Germany,

France or through Holland, and in the evening a steamer-train brings crowds from all these various directions to be conveyed back to Merry England.

This direct communication with England at the present day leads the thought naturally and easily back to the times of old when the connection was just as close—or, indeed, even much closer. When the prince of Orange had been struck down by the assassin's hand in 1584, the provinces turned their eyes for help first of all to Queen Elizabeth of England, as the ruler of the greatest Protestant nation. After much bickering and unworthy bargaining in a cause so holy she consented to lend the Dutch republic aid in money and in men, but it was only on the most exasperating conditions. She demanded the most ample security for her expenditures. Among other things, she required as guarantee several of the fortified frontier or seaboard towns. These were granted her, and Flushing was one of them. The command of Flushing was given to one of the most interesting characters, in many respects, that England has ever produced. Motley says of him, "There is hardly a character in history upon which the imagination can dwell with more unalloyed delight. Not in romantic fiction was there ever created a more attractive incarnation of martial valor, poetic genius and purity of heart." This was no less a person than Sir Philip Sidney, as celebrated in the annals of chiv-

alry and war as in those of English literature. Unfortunately, scarce a year after his appointment as governor of Flushing he was mortally wounded during the siege of the city of Zutphen, in Gelderland. While almost dying of thirst he refused to take the water offered him, but handed it to a common soldier lying near him, with the noble words, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

This remarkable man, then, was appointed to take command of Flushing in the name of the queen of England. He arrived there in the month of November, 1585. Naturally, there followed a great influx of English-speaking people into a town thus governed and in virtual possession of England's queen. The garrison was largely composed of English, Scotch and Irish troops. By reason of the facilities for commerce, too, many persons came from Great Britain to establish themselves in business. In consequence of this, we are not surprised that there was organized a Scotch Presbyterian church the next year after Sir Philip Sidney's arrival, or in 1586, exactly three hundred years before the date of our visit.

It is with this church that we are now concerned. Founded by those who had come from the Fatherland in person, it was evidently kept up with considerable interest and zeal by their descendants, for in the eighteenth century, or nearly two hundred years later, we find it still in existence. In the year 1759 this Scotch Presbyterian church of Flush-

ing called as its pastor the Rev. Archibald Laidlie, a native of Scotland and a recent graduate of the University of Edinburgh. On September 1, 1759, he was regularly installed under the auspices of the Classis of Walcheren, for at that time all foreign churches on Dutch soil of the same order as the Reformed Church of Holland stood in official relation to the State-Church. For four years Mr. Laidlie continued to serve this church at Flushing, becoming during those years familiar with the Dutch language, the Dutch customs and the Dutch character. His success as a pastor was eminently gratifying, and his position in every way was a happy and prosperous one. In the midst of his successful and happy career there occurred what must have been a matter of strange and startling import in those days. He received a call to become one of the pastors of the Collegiate Dutch Reformed church of New York City, in America. This remarkable call reached him in the fall of 1763. On the 15th of October he announced the fact to the Consistory, saying, at the same time, that "after due consideration he felt himself obliged, in duty to God, to accept the call." He was regularly dismissed from both church and Classis. On December 1 he was in Amsterdam, and was received as member of the Classis there, for the church of New York was at that time directly under its jurisdiction. In February, 1764, he sailed from England, and on the

29th of March landed at New York. "The people received me," he wrote to friends in Scotland, "with the greatest friendship possible, and rejoiced so at my coming that the whole city seemed to be in confusion." On the afternoon of Sunday, April 15, Mr. Laidlie preached his first sermon in the church on Nassau street which within recent years was used as the New York post-office. His text was 2 Cor. v. 11: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Now, why have we been so circumstantial in giving an account of apparently so simple an event? Because it was in reality an event of the greatest importance, of exceeding significance, in the history of the Reformed Church in America. For this sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. Laidlie in the year 1764, just one hundred years after the English had taken possession of New York, was "the first ever delivered in the English language in the Dutch Reformed Church."

This certainly was a remarkable circumstance, and shows the tenacity wherewith the people clung to their mother-tongue. But a hundred years of English possession had had their effect. Generations had sprung up that knew not Holland by any personal experience of it. As the years went on the Dutch language was used exclusively only in home and church circles, less and less so in social life and not at all in official life. The people grew

familiar with the English tongue in the way of business, society, municipal affairs. Episcopal churches, Presbyterian, and others, were established, and furnished opportunities for the use of English for devotional purposes. The younger generations took more easily to the foreign tongue, which was strictly their national tongue, for they were a part of the British nation. By scores were they leaving the Church of their fathers and their ancestors because here still the antiquated language was employed to worship God. Says a contemporary historian, "The Dutch congregation is more numerous than any other, but as the language becomes disused it is *much diminished,* and unless they change their worship into the English tongue must soon suffer a total dissipation." Many of the younger generation who could not bear to see this "total dissipation" urged upon the Consistory of the church of New York "the propriety and necessity of a substitution of the English for the Dutch language in the church service." This reasonable request was like a declaration of war in the eyes of many, especially of the aged part of the church, who were still "infatuated with the notion that its very existence depended upon the continuance of the language." Indeed, "the opposition assumed, at length, a malignant and violent aspect which induced more of the congregation, that had no relish for scenes of animosity and discord, to go over to other Chris-

tian societies."[1] At this crisis the Gordian knot of the whole controversy was cut in the only practicable way: the Consistory resolved to call an English minister. It was known that there were several English churches in different cities of the Dutch republic—Flushing, Middelburg, Delft, Rotterdam, The Hague, Leyden and Amsterdam—and that these at that time were in connection with or under the jurisdiction of the national Church of Holland. Therefore the Consistory "resolved not merely to call a minister to preach in the English language, but to call one *from Holland* through the medium of the Classis of Amsterdam. Accordingly, they prepared a blank call and enclosed it in a letter to the Classis, requesting that the call might be properly filled up and put into the hands of the individual whom that rev. body should deem qualified for the station." The paper thus sent resulted in the call of the Rev. Archibald Laidlie of the Scotch Presbyterian church at Flushing, in Zeeland.

Thus, when Dominie Laidlie preached that memorable installation sermon on April 15, 1764, and began his pastoral labors in the Dutch Reformed church of New York City, he found himself in the midst of fierce conflicts; for, being in his own person the visible evidence of the triumph of the English party, his very presence was exasperating to the other side. He was a man of such a beautiful

[1] Dr. Gunn's *Life of Rev. J. H. Livingston, D. D.*, p. 101.

and conciliatory Christian spirit, however, that he soon won the confidence and appreciation of all parties, not only toward himself, but for the idea which he represented—the necessity of transition in the American Church from the language of Holland to that which was the vernacular of America.

But this question of language was intimately associated with another, which also was the occasion for much bitter controversy at that time. It was maintained by some that the destiny of the Reformed Church in America was leading her farther and farther *away* from the exclusive nationality which had given rise to its existence in this country, and therefore ever more logically and inevitably *toward* entire independence of the Church in Holland. So obvious a position, which events have certainly justified, was strenuously contested by a great number of the people and ministers of the Dutch churches in these colonies. A brief review of these agitations and their subsequent settlement will introduce us to the interesting and intimate relations which so long subsisted between the parent Church of Holland and the daughter Church in America.

II. The Reformed Church in America.

Nine years after the adjournment of the great Synod of Dort, or in the year 1628, the first congregation of the Dutch Reformed Church was regularly organized in the city of New York, then

New Amsterdam. With this began the history of the denomination in our republic. Only two years before, in 1626, the first attempt at permanent colonization had been made, and a governor, with other officers, sent over from the mother-country. The monopoly of establishing colonies in the Western hemisphere, and of conducting their affairs, was granted to an association of Dutch merchants or capitalists called the West India Company, a similar monopoly for the islands and countries in Eastern seas being vested in the East India Company, of older date and larger wealth than the former. It was the invariable custom of these companies to send out a minister or a schoolteacher who was also a catechist, or both, with every colonizing expedition; and quite an extensive amount of foreign-missionary work was thus accomplished by Hollanders as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. That the aim was to reach the heathen savages as well as to benefit the emigrating colonists appears abundantly from a letter still extant, addressed by the first pastor of the Dutch church on Manhattan Island to the office at home. He therein discusses the best method of teaching the gospel to the red men, appears to despair of impressing the adults and founds his chief hope upon instructions addressed to the children.

The headquarters of both the East and the West India Companies were located in the city of Am-

sterdam. It thus came to pass as a matter of course that almost all churches organized in distant parts of the earth were placed under the care and jurisdiction of the Classis of Amsterdam. The church on Manhattan Island, in the town of New Amsterdam, was no exception to the rule, and as other churches were organized in the city or on the island, as congregations multiplied in other portions of the New Netherland colony, they were still counted as subject in all their ecclesiastical affairs to the supervision and direction of the home Classis. When, in 1664, a change of masters took place on the surrender of New Amsterdam and all New Netherland to England, this event did not in the least affect the Dutch churches; so that they presented the rather anomalous condition of being ecclesiastically subject to Holland, while owing political allegiance to an entirely distinct power. It was not till about seventy years after the surrender that any one thought of calling attention to this anomaly or began to advocate a change in this condition of things.

Meanwhile, this dependence upon a Church judicatory at so great distance from the field occupied by these churches proved very detrimental to the progress of the denomination. If any of the young men felt drawn to enter the ministry, it was required of them to pursue their studies in the mother-country, or, even if permission were granted to fit themselves for the work at home, they were compelled to

travel to Holland in order to receive licensure and ordination. At last, therefore—and even then only at the suggestion of the Amsterdam Classis itself—the matter of securing greater ecclesiastical privileges was broached, and finally resulted in a unanimous petition for the same, addressed to the Classis. As yet there was not the remotest thought of seeking independence of the mother-Church: all that was desired and petitioned for was the delegating of certain powers, such as to ordain young men to the ministry, the lack of which had produced endless confusion and frequent injury to the churches.

Strange to say, after initiating the very measure that was now submitted to them for their consent, the Classis of Amsterdam were nine years in making up their minds to grant it. The letter conveying the privilege arrived in 1747; it contained, also, the plan that was to be adopted. The ministers and representative laymen of the American churches were to constitute an association to be called a *Coetus*. But in the very next year the Classis exhorted this newly-formed body *not* to ask for permission to examine and ordain students. As this was the great thing to be desired as fundamentally necessary to the prosperity of the churches, and as without this "their only privilege seemed to be to send a joint-letter once a year to Holland," it is easily imagined that many began to entertain somewhat bolder ideas as to their Church relations. None

even yet, however, were bold enough to advocate complete independence of a body located across three thousand miles of ocean; it was merely contemplated to secure the erection of a separate Classis in America. But no sooner was this obvious necessity spoken of in so many words, no sooner was it proposed to effect in reality what was universally felt to be so necessary, than division at once began to tear the churches asunder. It was now nearly a century and a half since the first Dutch church was organized, but a considerable portion of the Dutch people and ministers were not by any means ready to sever their connection with the parent Church, or even the Classis, in Holland. Those who were for separation—in the sense, at least, of a separate Classis—pushed their ideas and acted upon them practically to some extent: those who resented what, to their minds, was so audacious and revolutionary a measure withdrew from the Coetus and formed an association that reaffirmed as their foundation-principle a subordination to the Classis of Amsterdam just as entire as it ever had been, rendering the churches again as devoid of self-help as they were before 1747. This ultra-loyal association at a session held September 30, 1755, adopted the name of *Conferentie.* Occasionally attempts at reconciliation between the Coetus and the Conferentie parties were made, but without success, and so for many years a bitter ecclesiastical conflict raged; hearts were sadly

estranged, the name of God was blasphemed among "those that are without," the Church of Christ was deeply injured and her progress was grievously retarded.

In the midst of this state of affairs the Rev. Archibald Laidlie arrived from Holland and was installed one of the pastors of the church of New York. The peaceful prosperity of his years at Flushing bade fair to be followed by an experience quite the opposite and in deplorable contrast with it. With the controversy about independence or subordination to the Church of Holland he had, of course, directly nothing to do, and he maintained a strict neutrality, advocating peace. Yet in extending the strength and influence of the English party it is easily seen to which side the weight of his labors and character inclined.

Indeed, it was a youth born and reared among the English-speaking families of the Reformed Church who became the instrument, under God, of healing the suicidal strife among the Dutch churches. Desiring to devote himself to the ministry, after graduating from Yale College he went to Holland in the year 1766, studied theology at the University of Utrecht, and was ordained to the ministry by the Classis of Amsterdam in 1770. He was then called by the church of New York, and became the *second* English pastor in the Reformed Church in America. This youth was the Rev. John H. Livingston, grad-

uated with the degree of doctor of divinity at Utrecht.

We have represented Dr. Livingston, in a former chapter, as possibly meditating and praying over a plan to reconcile differences in the American churches while pacing the academic cloisters at Utrecht. That this may not altogether have been a fancy picture events would indicate. When he came back to America he carried with him a plan for union which had the full sanction of the Classis of Amsterdam. It is not certain that he was the author of it, but he must necessarily have had much to do with its composition, and without any doubt it was due to his efforts that it was approved by the Classis of Amsterdam, and finally adopted, with a perfect reconciliation of all differences, by the Church in America. The plan was based upon a surrender by the mother-Classis to the united churches in this country of all those essential ecclesiastical powers which made them practically an independent and a separate Church.

At the suggestion of Dr. Livingston, the Consistory of New York on September 4, 1771, addressed a circular letter to all the churches inviting them to attend a general convention to be held in New York City. It was stated that the object of the convention was to consider a plan of union. In response to this call, a large proportion of the ministers then in the denomination, attended by lay dele-

gates from the churches, arrived in New York early in October. On October 15, 1771—memorable date!—these representatives of the conflicting churches, sixteen years after the severance of Coetus and Conferentie, gathered in one of the collegiate churches. Dr. Livingston spoke a brief welcome, and then Dominie de Ronde, of the Conferentie party, preached a sermon on the text, "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. vi. 23. After these exercises the assembly proceeded to the business before them. The meeting was organized by the election of Dr. Livingston as president—an honor which he richly merited. The plan of union was then submitted, and referred to a committee of twelve, composed of two ministers and two elders from each of the three parties, Coetus, Conferentie and neutrals. Both in committee and in convention the plan was unanimously adopted. Thus the Church in America received autonomy, holding thereafter but slight and complimentary connection with Holland. Soon came the Revolution, the independence of the thirteen colonies, the creation of the republic of the United States, and formally and finally, in the year 1784, the churches in America constituted themselves an entirely separate and independent denomination with a Synod and Classes of their own. At last, then, one hundred and twenty years after the political separation of the

New Netherland colonists from their mother-country, the bond that held them in ecclesiastical relations to the Church of Holland was severed. While acknowledging to the full the extreme necessity of the separation, shall we not honor in the daughter-Church that tenacity of adherence begotten of a grateful remembrance of help and sustenance in the days of her feebleness?

Flushing, therefore, was a city we desired to visit. The events which introduced its name into the history of the American Church testified emphatically to the strong and loving and loyal attachment of the daughter to the parent Church of our denomination. Yet did they indicate also, suggestively and clearly, the approach toward a period of maturity when the younger branch needed no longer the counsels or the nurture of the elder. Hence the memories connected with this city could not but vividly and as by an object-lesson link together in our thoughts the Reformed churches of Holland and America upon the very soil of the mother-Church.

Surely these memories crowded upon us as we stood within the very church of which Dominie Laidlie was once the pastor. Its situation is a most curious one. It occupies no separate building of its own. We were directed to the "great," or St. Jacob's, church, the principal Reformed church of Flushing. Like all of these "great"—*i. e.*, cathedral—churches in Dutch cities, Protestant worship

has no need of more than half of their immense space. Usually the nave, with its aisles, affords ample accommodation for all the hearers that can possibly be reached by the human voice in preaching. The transept and the choir are therefore invariably unoccupied, and their space is superfluous. But at Flushing a good use has been made of one-half of the transept of the St. Jacob's church. A brick wall has been reared, shutting off this part completely from the rest of the interior, and, thus separated, it has been devoted to the uses of the Scotch Presbyterian Church. The benches are of the straightest and stiffest; the pulpit is high, clumsy, old-fashioned; there is no beauty nor elegance to make this place of worship attractive. All is severe and stern, solemn and bare. But forth from this church and its people went the Rev. Archibald Laidlie into an unknown land across perilous seas to plant the banner of the gospel upon the shores of America, to help lift one of the churches of God in this republic out of paralyzing mistakes unto a wiser practice and a more hopeful and useful future.

CHAPTER VII.

KAMPEN; OR, THE PROTEST AGAINST STATE-CHURCHISM.

THE river Rhine, when it crosses the borders of Holland, is devoid of romantic beauty, but flows on with a broad current of unabated force. What must be considered in reality the river itself receives here a different name—"the Waal"—which, again, is unjustly changed to "the Maas" when the latter has joined its feeble and meagre current to the mightier flood. Under this name the Rhine waters flow past Dort and Rotterdam and through numerous mouths pour themselves into the North Sea.

Before the first of these misleading changes of designation the river throws off a large branch to the north. For this the map-makers retain the magic name of "the Rhine." On passing Arnhem, the capital of Gelderland province, it turns sharply to the west, after a score or more of miles gets another arbitrary change of name—"the Lek"—and so adds a second supply of Rhine water to the so-called "Maas" a few miles east of Rotterdam.

Meanwhile, the map-makers continue the name of "Rhine" to a narrow branch running past Utrecht and through Leyden, as if this were the main stream. Thus it comes to appear from the maps as if the glorious Rhine had grown so feeble as to need to be assisted to an ignominious, artificial flow into the North Sea by means of a series of sluice-works at Katwyk village.

That this is not really the case—that there is much more of the Rhine in Holland—we have already tried to indicate. But there is still other evidence of the abundance and force of its waters. Ere the branch bearing the parent name reaches Arnhem it throws off to the north-east a secondary branch—"the Yssel"—which bends round to the north and then to the north-west, flowing with a broad, swift current between the provinces of Gelderland and Overyssel, and finally emptying itself by means of five outlets into the gulf of the Zuyder Zee. Just opposite the point where the river breaks up into these five arms is situated the city of Kampen.

Kampen is a city beautiful for situation and beautifully adorned. The Rhine waters rush past it with a current broad and deep and swift. Spanning the river is a noble bridge constructed of iron trestlework resting upon four piers, which sustain eight graceful towers of brick and stone. Other cities of Holland do well if they can show one

solitary town-gate as a relic of former days; here are preserved no less than four, each more picturesque than the other. Except on the side where it faces the river the town is surrounded by an elegant park diversified with flower-beds and shrubs and lawn, the pleasing transformation wrought here, as elsewhere (but here most beautifully), upon the ruins of the ancient city-walls. One of the three largest cathedrals of Holland is situated here, and is appropriately dedicated to Holland's patron saint, St. Nicholas, or "Santa Claus." Kampen rejoices, too, in the possession of one of the oldest and quaintest town-halls to be found in the country, and the town, as a corporation, derives so rich a revenue from a tract of land known as "Kamper Island" that the inhabitants are exempt from municipal taxes.

This favored and fortunate place drew our wandering footsteps because it is, so to speak, the Mecca of the "Christian Reformed Church"—the separatist, or Free, Church, as distinguished from the Established, or Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Holland. Here is located the theological seminary of this "disestablished" Church, and hence, too, emanate the counsels and instructions which materially mould the views and the policy of the denomination all over the country. The origin of this Church presents an interesting phase in the history of the development of church-life in Hol-

land, being the result of a protest against a long-continued and deadening State-Churchism.

The Synod of Dort in one important particular had reckoned without its host. It may not comport exactly with the dignity of so august a body to use so familiar an expression with regard to it, but in reality nothing so well sets forth the predicament into which it brought itself by invoking the aid of the government as to say that it had caught a Tartar: "An effect of the Synod appears to have been that the bond between Church and State was drawn closer. The Synod thought that the result would have been just the opposite, but it was mistaken. The State was willing to maintain the doctrine of Calvin; it was not willing to give up its control over the Church. The call for the Synod had gone out from the State. Its approval of all the synodical proceedings had been asked for and obtained. Its delegates had supervised the meeting. The enforcement by the State of its acts against the remonstrants was expected. The State felt that it had gained an advantage, and it was not disposed to give it up."[1]

In short, the Reformed Church of Holland became a State-Church—an Establishment. It had existed before this as the result of a mighty spiritual revival, and had lived by its hold upon the hearts of a people who had risked all for the sake

[1] Hansen's *Reformed Church in the Netherlands*, pp. 182, 183.

of obtaining and preserving both civil and religious liberty. Indeed, the effort to secure civil liberty was made in order to have liberty of conscience. A change was now coming over the spirit and life of this Church. Its chief maintenance henceforth was to be the secular arm and the secular purse.

This condition of affairs continued till the advent of the French Revolution. Holland became first a part of the French republic by the eager choice of her own people, and later was incorporated with the French empire and was constituted a kingdom with the brother of Napoleon as king. In consequence of these political changes, the Reformed Church was cast loose from the State and left to get along the best way it could, while the central government was first atheistic and later Catholic. But Napoleon met with his Waterloo, and Holland became once more an independent State. The taste of kingly government had made the republic so in love with it that on the return of the house of Orange the stadtholder was made a king, and an indirect descendant of William the Silent became William I., king of the Netherlands.

This sovereign proposed to take the Church under his wing and aimed to make the Reformed Church very much more of a State Establishment than it had ever been under the republic. On January 7, 1816, or a little over half a year after the victory of Waterloo had given him a firm seat upon

his throne, William I. promulgated a decree which contained these unmistakable regulations: "1. No ecclesiastical assembly shall correspond with foreign churches without the consent of the king; 2. The members of the next Synod shall receive their appointment from the king; 3. The king shall appoint the permanent synodical clerk and the president of each Synod; 4. The Synod shall not convene on any day other than that stated in the rules without the consent of the king, nor shall it be permitted to promulgate any of its resolutions except such as he approves; 5. Every meeting of the Synod must be attended by the minister of public worship or by one or more political commissaries."[1]

Alas for the spiritual life of a Church thus controlled! Alas, too, for the preservation of its purity of doctrine! In the course of a few years rationalism began to insinuate its leaven into the Reformed Church of Holland. Even the ministers of the gospel who had subscribed to the Canons of Dort hesitated not to depart from them, nor to depart from many evangelical doctrines besides. They excused their conduct on the ground that the formula they were required to sign read that they should teach and preach the doctrines of the Church only *in so far as* (Latin, *quatenus*) they were in accord with Scripture. They claimed they were their own judge as to *how far*. To counteract so baneful

[1] Hansen's *Reformed Church in the Netherlands*, p. 290.

a conclusion, several earnest and evangelical men sought to obtain a declaration from the General Synod of 1835 that the intention of the formula was to bind men to preach the doctrines of the Church *because* (*quia*) they were contained or taught in the Bible. The Synod, consisting of appointees of the king and presided over by his favorite, by a large majority decided in favor of the looser interpretation which opened so convenient a door for the entrance of rationalism.

Even before this had come the first vigorous and practical protest against State-Churchism. In October, 1834, a minister in Friesland declared himself and his congregation independent of the State and abjured all adherence to the authority of the national Synod. That voice from the North ran through the entire country. The next movement in the same direction occurred in North Brabant, one of the southern provinces of the kingdom. Here the Rev. H. P. Scholte, with his three village congregations, located in the vicinity of the town of Heusden, seceded from the Established Church. The men of prominence who next cast in their lot with these bold pioneers were the Revs. A. C. Van Raalte and A. Brummelkamp. They were men of eminent piety, excellent theological culture and apostolic earnestness. Under these trusted guides the movement was soon conducted to its logical outcome—namely, the establishment of an independent, self-

sustaining ecclesiastical organization wholly separate from the State, occupying exactly the position of the various denominational bodies in this republic. For this reason the names of Scholte, Van Raalte and Brummelkamp are still fondly remembered and highly honored among those who are the adherents of the disestablished Church in the Fatherland, or who went forth unto strange shores in the cause of this later Protestantism.

It may well be supposed that the king who had made such elaborate arrangements for holding in his hands the supreme control of the Church did not look on with indifference when he saw a large portion of the communicants casting off the yoke of his authority. A spectacle strange indeed for the nineteenth century began to present itself in Holland: "That same rationalism which boasted so loudly of its toleration took the responsibility of persecution in the Netherlands. In that very land which from the earliest times has been honored for its liberty of conscience occurred during several years in the first half of the nineteenth century public religious persecutions by means of endless fines and imprisonments, and by the quartering of troops on our families."[1] It was in consequence of these unhappy

[1] Letter of Dr. Brummelkamp, the only survivor of the three men whose names we have mentioned, to the Reformed Church in America at the celebration of the centennial of its theological seminary in New Brunswick, N. J., October, 1884. See p. 193 of *Centennial Volume*, containing proceedings, addresses, etc.

events that (in 1847) large numbers of the seceding Church, under the leadership of Revs. H. P. Scholte and A. C. Van Raalte, left their homes and came to settle in America, locating themselves principally in the States of Iowa and Michigan. As might be expected, they joined their fortunes eventually with the "Reformed Church in America"—a body which not only claimed a common ancestry in blood and in faith, but which had maintained inviolate its adherence to that orthodoxy in whose cause these strangers had expatriated themselves.

Meantime, the "Christian Reformed Church," free from the shackles of the State and purified from all affinity with unorthodoxy or rationalism, went on to prosperity and strength in the Fatherland. On the accession of William II. to the throne all persecutions and disabilities of the "separatists," as they were called, ceased at once. Congregations multiplied; churches were built and ministers were supported without a cent of money from the civil treasury, in spite of the fact that thousands of dollars had been extorted in the way of fines. The necessities of the case soon called for the establishment of a "school of the prophets" to supply the growing demand for spiritual instructors, the supply of whom could not be looked for from the national universities. Hence, after some years of provisional and very imperfect arrangements, the General Synod of 1854 took steps to establish a

theological school. Four ministers were elected as theological professors. Property was secured in the delightful city of Kampen, a plain building was erected, and the seminary began its operations with thirty-seven students. Since that time the average number of students in the preparatory and theological departments has been from eighty to ninety; eight instructors, including theological professors, constitute the faculty of the institution.

One of the original four professors appointed in 1854 was that early founder of the Church, the Rev. Dr. Brummelkamp. This worthy man still occupies the position, fulfilling its duties in the enjoyment of remarkable powers, as yet, of body and of mind. Having been drawn to Kampen to vivify our impressions of this notable event in the history of the Church of Holland, it was our chief desire to meet the venerable professor. A cordial welcome greeted us at his house. It is situated upon a canal street whose rows of unpretending but dignified and comfortable dwellings, interspersed with churches and other public buildings, reflect themselves in the clear and placid waters of the channel between. The classic quietude of the surroundings seemed eminently appropriate to the studious life here led, and would appear to be affording a happy, restful and yet eminently useful close to a career that commenced in the midst of controversies and persecutions.

The city of Kampen, therefore, brings to us vividly the memories of that protest against State-Churchism which signalized the year 1834, and from the very midst of the memories of that significant episode of the past we may look out upon agitations and events of the present day that are quite as significant, partaking of the character of the earlier movement, and possibly the result of the faithful witnessing of that trying time. Immediately after 1834 a season of spiritual refreshing and quickening visited even the Established Church, but rationalism again asserted itself and filled many a pulpit of the Reformed Church with men whose sound was worse than uncertain, for they openly denied the Lord who bought them. At the same time, while there seems to have been an abandonment of that humiliating interference by the king in Church affairs which went even to the extent of appointing the delegates to Synod, there now arose a feature of Church government which was fully as objectionable. From Presbyterian the government of the State-Church became what may be called "*Bureaucratic*"—*i. e.*, in every Church court, from General Synod down to Classis, all authority and the conduct of affairs were relegated to a select number of men, a sort of executive committee, with power to act in practical independence of the whole body. It is easily seen how, amid a growing liberalism or rationalism, these potent little bureaus might be largely composed of

men whose proclivities were all on that side. It was in opposition to this unscriptural, anti-Reformed, un-Presbyterian mode of government—bringing with it various acts of oppression amounting almost to persecution against those who would reclaim the Church for the Reformed faith and a pure gospel—that a mighty movement was inaugurated at the beginning of 1887. A considerable number of communicants, shaking off the yoke of the odious oligarchies which rule Classes, Provincial and General Synods, began to organize themselves into congregations *not* seceding from the Reformed Church of Holland, but, on the contrary, claiming to be in reality that Church itself, only purified from the foreign and unscriptural elements that had been introduced in violation of all right and justice.

We are glad to recognize in this movement another protest against State-Churchism. Like the one in 1834, it is closely in line with the stand taken by the Church when, in fear and trembling, but with sublime courage and faith, the fathers met in synodical assembly at Wesel or at Dort at the beginning of the Eighty Years' War. It is a development again, as was the one of 1834, most closely in accord with that of the Reformed Church which emigrated from Holland nine years after the great Synod of 1618–1619, and which secured in America ecclesiastical being and strength by reason of no

other earthly aid than its own inherent life. And both the earlier and later movements testify to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping Jehovah, who signally blessed the Church of Holland in its beginning, who then laid within it a power of vital godliness which not only has defied all the deadening or rationalistic influences of State-Churchism hitherto, but which will be its final overthrow. The blood of the martyrs who died for a pure, unmutilated gospel has not been spilled in vain.

PART II.

MARTYRS OF HOLLAND.

CHAPTER I.

— *THE INQUISITION IN THE NETHERLANDS.*

"FOR several ages," says Chandler, in his *History of Persecution*—"For several ages the method of proceeding against heretics was committed to the bishops, with whom the government and care of the churches were entrusted, according to the received decrees of the Church of Rome. But as their number did not seem sufficient to the court, or because they did not proceed with that fury against heretics as the popes would have them, therefore, that he [the pope] might put a stop to the increasing progress of heresy and effectually extinguish it, about the year of our Lord 1200 he founded the orders of the *Dominicans* and *Franciscans*. They were both commanded by the pope to excite the Catholic princes and people to extirpate heretics, and in all places to *inquire out* their number and quality, and also the zeal of the Catholics and bishops in their extirpation, and to transmit a faithful account to Rome. Hence they are called *inquisitors*."[1]

[1] *The History of Persecution*, Samuel Chandler (London, 1736), p. 160. We have modernized the spelling.

This, then, was the origin of the notorious INQUISITION. The ordinary machinery of Church government not proving adequate to the task of rooting out those who dared question the doctrines of the popish Church, a special order of men was created—or, rather, two monastic orders were set apart—to accomplish this most abominable of ecclesiastical labors. It started at once full-grown upon its career of injustice and cruelty. Though enlarged in its scope and improved upon in its methods of exquisite iniquity in later times, when the heresy of the Reformation had far outstripped even that which called for the extirpation of the Waldenses and Albigenses, in whose special behalf the tribunal was reared up, yet, as Prescott informs us, "this ancient Inquisition, as it is termed, bore the same odious peculiarities in its leading features as the modern—the same impenetrable secrecy in its proceedings, the same insidious modes of accusation, a similar use of torture and similar penalties for the offender." [1]

The modern Inquisition begins with that worst of all its forms known as the "Spanish Inquisition." It was called into being at the instance of narrow-minded and shortsighted ecclesiastics in Spain who wished to destroy the Jews in that kingdom. When this suicidal work had been sufficiently achieved and

[1] *History of Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*, Part I. Chap. VII.

the court's occupation seemed nearly gone, the conquest of Granada once more furnished opportunities for its vigorous operation; and when victims were likely to grow scarce among the poor frightened, half-Christianized Moors, the time had come for turning this fearful enginery of persecution against the hated adherents of the Reformation. It seems incredible that this blot upon civilization, this libel and blasphemy upon the spirit of Christianity, should have continued in existence not only, but even in operation, until and into this nineteenth century. But the Inquisition was not suppressed in Spain till the year 1808. Briefly stated, the following characteristics distinguished the Spanish Inquisition: "It was a court owning allegiance to no temporal authority, superior to all other tribunals. It was a bench of monks without appeal, having its familiars in every house, diving into the secrets of every fireside, judging and executing its horrible decrees without responsibility. It condemned, not deeds, but thoughts. Its process was reduced to a horrible simplicity. It arrested on suspicion, tortured till confession and then punished by fire. Two witnesses, and those to separate facts, were sufficient to consign the victim to a loathsome dungeon. He was informed of the testimony against him, but never confronted with the witness."[1]

It might have been expected from the close polit-

[1] Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, Vol. I. p. 323.

ical connection between Spain and the Netherlands that the "Spanish Inquisition" would have been introduced into the provinces, but, technically speaking, this was never done, and the claim of Philip II. that it was not is so far correct. But, as Motley points out, this peculiar form of the Inquisition was quite superfluous in the Netherlands. Its special efficiency consisted "in discovering such of its victims as were disposed to deny their faith." It was "devised originally for infidels, who were often disposed to skulk in obscure places, and to renounce without really abandoning their errors. The inquisitorial system of Spain was hardly necessary for men who had but little prudence in concealing and no inclination to disavow their creed." But if the Spanish Inquisition was not found in the Low Countries, what forms of it *were* in operation there? The most ancient and most strictly ecclesiastical of all, or the "episcopal," and that created by the popes at the beginning of the thirteenth century, or the "papal Inquisition."

The latter first claims our attention. In April, 1522, a twelvemonth after Luther's condemnation by the Diet of Worms, the emperor Charles V. appointed an inquisitor-general for the Netherlands. He was a layman, and, as we observe, obtained his appointment from a layman. He soon, however, solicited the sanction of the pope for the office and his occupancy of it, and his successors—who were

not long in following him, as his private character demanded his deposition—were directly designated by the pope. This direct interference of the pope constituted the "papal Inquisition," for it was thus in entire accord with the measure inaugurated about the year 1200, being, like that, independent of all other ecclesiastical arrangements and instituted to supplement the less vigorous and expeditious methods of the bishops. Among those who were raised to the odious dignity of inquisitor-general we shall meet with the name of Ruward Tapper in the pages that follow. It will also be seen that by the provisions of some of the "placards"—an account of which will occur in our review of the martyrs—the civil authorities were made entirely subservient to the inquisitors of the pope, and hence, for all practical purposes, the papal Inquisition was quite as efficient as the Spanish. Indeed, although Philip II. was disposed to take much credit to himself for not introducing the latter into the provinces, he once permitted himself to express the terrible truth, "The Inquisition of the Netherlands is much more pitiless than that of Spain."[1]

It would seem that no other form of the Inquisition was necessary for the purposes of persecution in this hapless country, but, besides and before the papal, there was, of course, here, as elsewhere in Catholic countries, the ordinary episcopal Inquisi-

[1] Motley, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

tion. It is important to remind ourselves of the existence of this institution, because we shall find that many of the martyrs, especially in the northern provinces, seem to have been brought to their fate by processes indicating ecclesiastical action rather than any other. The papal Inquisition could be successfully operated, after all, mainly in the southern parts, nearer the seat of government; it was not an institution that throve amid the sturdy people of the North and at a distance from the viceregal court. Indeed, we shall discover instances, as we study the history of martyrdoms there, where even Catholics sought to defraud the Inquisition of its prey.

Not satisfied with the papal Inquisition, introduced into the Netherlands by his father the emperor as early as 1522, Philip on his accession, in 1555, began to take steps to increase the efficiency of the episcopal Inquisition, dating from earliest times, before Dominicans and Franciscans had yet been heard of. In all the seventeen provinces there were but four bishoprics. Of these, Utrecht, as has been stated, belonged to the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Cologne, in Germany;[1] the other three were subject to the archbishop of Rheims, in France. It seemed but right that among a population at once so dense and so opulent there should be more bishoprics, and especially that none of these should be

[1] Part I. Chap. I.

under authority to prelates having their seats in foreign countries. Therefore, Philip conceived the plausible idea of increasing the number of episcopal sees within the provinces, and of raising three of the sees then in existence to the dignity of archiepiscopates, to which all the others to be created should be subject. This plan was submitted to the pope, and was finally approved and established by papal bull in January, 1560. Utrecht, Mechlin and Cambray became archbishoprics, and fifteen dioceses were distributed among them. Thus eighteen prelates instead of four were entrusted with the spiritual concerns of the Netherlanders.

The measure, however, instead of gratifying this people, raised a tempest of indignation among them, and, confirming them in the righteousness of resistance to their sovereign, it contributed as one of the leading causes to the final establishment of the Dutch republic. What, then, was the rock of offence at which they stumbled? Innocent, indeed, appeared Philip's motives; true were the words of the papal bull: "At the period of the original establishment of cathedral churches the provinces had been sparsely populated; they had now become filled to overflowing, so that the original ecclesiastical arrangement did not suffice. *The harvest was plentiful, but the laborers were few.*" But the sting of the measure was in one provision, laid down by the pope, that "each bishop should appoint nine

additional prebendaries, who were to assist him in the matter of the *Inquisition* throughout his bishopric, *two of whom were themselves to be inquisitors.*"[1]

Here, then, was the episcopal Inquisition, not only increased in efficiency by an increase in the number of bishops, but skillfully dovetailed, besides, into the papal Inquisition by that final requirement. What need was there in the Netherlands for the Spanish Inquisition, technically so called?

[1] Motley's *Rise*, etc., Vol. I. p. 267.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION.

THE proto-martyrs of the Reformation were not, so far as we know, natives of the republic of the United (Northern) Netherlands, neither was the scene of their martyrdom within these provinces; nevertheless, the significance of their position and justice to their memory eminently deserve and demand that we devote a chapter to them.

On April 18, 1521, Luther had announced his irrevocable decision before the diet of the German empire assembled in the city of Worms, on the Rhine, in the memorable words, "Here I stand; I can do no otherwise. So help me, God. Amen." Luther was placed under the ban of the empire; his teachings were condemned, and their promulgation was threatened with condign punishment.

Charles V. was emperor of Germany—an electoral office not much more than an exalted title. Over the territories of the empire he had little or no jurisdiction excepting over such as were his own hereditary possessions, but he was supreme lord of Spain and the Netherlands. What here he wished

to accomplish could be done by his mere word. In this same year, 1521, the first of his sanguinary and savage placards was issued, sentencing to death all adherents of the Reformation. These remained no dead letters: they bore horrible fruit in multiplied and multiform and frightful martyrdoms.

In the city of Antwerp there existed a monastery of the Augustinian brotherhood. Luther was an Augustinian monk, and for a while it looked as if the Reformation might be no more than a controversy between different monastic orders. At any rate, in monasteries of his own order his writings were read with avidity and his doctrines found early acceptance, while other orders felt bound to oppose him at first on the mere ground of monkish rivalry. The Antwerp brethren eagerly avowed a sympathy with Luther's sentiments, and as early as 1519 they preached these to ever-growing audiences in the church connected with their convent.[1] Soon after the placard of 1521 the prior and one of his principal monks were arrested and sent to Brussels. The former retracted; the latter escaped both retraction and punishment. Both were released.

Meantime, the other brethren were not deterred from their evangelical preaching. So active and successful were they in disseminating Luther's principles that the government was exasperated to the direst vengeance. The monks were all arrested, the

[1] D'Aubigné, *Hist. de la Réform.*, Book X. sec. 4.

Host and the sacred vessels were solemnly removed from the monastery and the buildings were razed to the ground. Most of the brethren, alarmed and not prepared to die for their faith, recanted. But the prior, Henry of Zutphen, and three of his monks remained firm and suffered themselves to be led to prison. The fate of the prior will form the subject of our next chapter, and therefore we dismiss him here with simply remarking that he was rescued from prison.

The three heroes of the faith with whom we have now to do were Lambert Thorn, John Voes and Henry Esch. They were imprisoned at Brussels, where Margaret of Austria, the aunt of Charles V., ruled as regent over the Netherland provinces. She was a bigoted Catholic, and entered with zest upon the enforcement of the emperor's placards to their fullest import.

No less than six theologians of the University of Louvain were commanded to repair to Brussels to conduct the examination of the prisoners. Being asked what they believed, they replied that they held the Apostles' Creed and believed all that was contained in the Holy Scriptures—that, moreover, they believed in a Christian Church, but not in such a Church as the inquisitors recognized. In the second place, it was demanded of them whether they accepted the decrees of the councils and the Fathers. They boldly answered only so far as they were con-

sistent with and did not gainsay the divine Scriptures. A third question was whether they considered that those who disregarded the decrees of the Pope and the Fathers were guilty of death or damnation, to which they gave answer that salvation or damnation hung upon the commandments of God, not upon human institutions.[1]

The 1st of July, 1523, should be a date deeply imprinted upon the memory of the Protestant world, for it marked the beginning of an epoch of as great significance to the Church of God as that begun by the martyrdom of Stephen or by the first persecution under the Roman emperors. On the great market-place of Brussels, overshadowed by the magnificent town-hall with its slender and lofty tower, surrounded on all sides by imposing buildings, some of which became memorable in the subsequent struggles for liberty of conscience, a vast assembly of people had gathered to behold a spectacle which was then happily a novel one to them, but which was soon to become all too familiar and frequent. In the centre of the square, on the spot where later flowed the blood of Egmond and Hoorn—and where, to-day (strange mockery of former tragedies!), stands a music-pavilion—a scaffold was erected. The dignitaries of the Church and the Louvain professors, arrayed in their robes, were seated on chairs according to their rank. In the midst was placed

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 90.

The Market Place of Brussels; Scene of the first Martyrdoms of the Reformation. Page 156.

a table draped and arranged to represent an altar. The youngest of the three condemned heretics, a beardless youth, was made to kneel before this altar. At eleven o'clock the exercises began. After the prior of the Gray Friars had preached a sermon, a bishop read the formula for degradation from the priesthood and performed the accompanying ceremonies. This part of the performances lasted exactly one hour. At noon the youth was led back to prison, and the other two victims were each in turn brought forth to be subjected to the same public degradation from his holy office. This done, it remained but to execute upon them the sentence for heresy—to be burned alive at the stake. But for some unexplained reason one of their number, Lambert Thorn, was not led to execution. D'Aubigné seems to think that he was overcome by the fear of so frightful a death, and recanted. Another authority alludes to a report of this kind, but remarks that this does not seem probable, for in such a case the inquisitors would have been but too glad to make as public an announcement of the recantation as possible. The Dutch historian of the Reformation, G. Brandt, upon the authority of Erasmus, gives it as his opinion that he was secretly put to death in prison.

To John Voes and Henry Esch, then, must be awarded the undoubted crown of martyrdom; to them belongs the distinction of having been the

proto-martyrs of the Reformation. For them, at least, we know that the fire had no terrors. Calmly they answered, when the chief inquisitor told them that if they would even now recant he had the power to release them, "Those are the words of Pilate; thou wouldest have no power at all over us, except it were given thee from above." They availed themselves of every opportunity to address the surrounding multitudes, and averred that they died as Christian men, believing in a holy Catholic Christian Church. They declared that this was a day for which they had greatly longed—that to bind them to the stake was unnecessary, for they would clasp it with their own hands. Nor were these words mere idle boasts; they remained steadfast, and even cheerful, when they had mounted the ominous pile of fagots. As if to try their fortitude, the fuel was lighted in such a manner that the flames advanced very slowly. The name of Jesus was constantly upon their lips; they repeated in concert the Apostles' Creed. As the fire crept nearer and nearer they diverted their attention from its cruelly slow approach, and supported each other in their holy firmness by singing, alternately, the several stanzas of the *Te Deum*. When the ruddy tongues of fire began to leap up and lick their feet, one of them said, "These seem to me like roses which are being strewn on my pathway." But at last the choking fumes and the fearful torture took away conscious-

ness and brought the welcome death after they had finally in audible tones commended their souls unto God.

Even beyond death, however, the malice of their persecutors pursued them and sought to undermine their fair fame and to stay the overpowering influence of their martyrdom. It was said that one of the victims after death had appeared to a brother monk, and had assured him that their souls were saved, since in the last extremity, in the midst of the fire and on the point of death, they had repented of their heresy and the Virgin's intercession had wrought their pardon.[1]

But the "fable" was believed by no one. "The first blood that was shed in the Netherlands since the rise of Luther," as Brandt expresses himself, was of a kind with all that other "blood of the martyrs" which from the times of the Fathers down had ever proved "the seed of the Church." The keen-sighted Erasmus, not much in sympathy with martyrdom, wrote: "In Brussels they first burned two at the stake, and from that time on that city had marvelously favored Luther's teachings."[2]

Luther himself gave these two martyrs their full meed of honor. "Your bonds," he exclaimed, "are my bonds, your dungeons are my dungeons, your

[1] Brandt, *Hist. der Reform.*, I. pp. 79, 80. He calls this a "fable."

[2] Brandt, *idem*, p. 80.

fires my fires. We are all with you, and the Lord is at your head."[1] He seemed filled with a solemn joy and holy gladness that for that faith which he had been permitted to preach again in its purity, the Lord had raised up witnesses who shrunk not from the death of martyrdom in their maintenance of it. He wrote a hymn to commemorate the great event, and one of the stanzas has been thus translated:

"Their ashes will not silent lie,
But, scattered far and near,
Stream, dungeon, bolt and grave defy—
Their foeman's shame and fear.
Those whom in life the tyrant's wrongs
To silence could subdue,
In death shall chant their joyous songs,
Which in all languages and tongues
Shall fly the whole world through."[2]

"This hymn," says D'Aubigné, "was soon heard resounding throughout Germany and the Netherlands, in cities and the open country, and it everywhere increased the enthusiasm for the faith of these martyrs."[3]

[1] D'Aubigné.
[2] *Beggars of Holland and Grandees of Spain*, Mears, p. 81.
[3] *Hist. de la Réform.*, Book X. sec. 4.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY OF ZUTPHEN.

THE prior of the monastery in Antwerp which furnished the two proto-martyrs of the Reformation was, as we have already mentioned, Henry of Zutphen. This city, then, memorable for the massacre which left in it scarce one soul alive, and which was the first of the series of similar outrages culminating in the siege and sack of Haarlem; the city which has become known in the annals of English chivalry and literature by the mortal wounding of Sir Philip Sidney in its defence,—this same place is to be noted, also, for having been the birthplace of the first native of the provinces constituting the Dutch republic whose name was added to "the noble army of martyrs" during the Reformation. Here, in this now so beautiful town, whose flowery quays reflect themselves in the swift waters of the Yssel, beneath the shadow of St. Walburg Church, of noble proportions and with lofty steeples,—here Henry must have received those earliest religious impressions which determined him to devote his life to God. Ay, perhaps in that very chapel with low

and vaulted ceiling, with rude wooden benches and steep, slanting reading-desks to which are chained monkish manuscript books and the earliest printed books,—here, in this quaint library of St. Walburg, Henry of Zutphen may have studied, his fingers may have leafed through the very books shown to the visitor, still fastened by their grim chains.

History, however, makes no mention of him till he is found at Antwerp, the prior of an Augustinian monastery, the successor, very probably, of the one who had been arrested and led to Brussels in 1521. When, in October, 1522, the monastery was invaded by the authorities, the monks arrested and the buildings demolished, Henry, their prior, and three young monks were, as we have seen, the only ones who remained firm. They were accordingly conveyed to Brussels, and there imprisoned. The crown of martyrdom for Henry, however, was reserved for another occasion. We learn from a letter written by Luther in December of the same year that he was rescued by a heroic effort on the part of the women of Brussels.[1]

So narrow an escape from a certain and frightful death did not in the least impede his ardent labors in the spread of a purer gospel. We find him in Antwerp for more than a year after his imprisonment, but in 1524 he received an urgent call to labor in a field at quite a distance from the commer-

[1] D'Aubigné, *Hist. de la Réform.*, Book X. sec. 4.

cial metropolis of the Netherlands. It was beyond the limits of the personal possessions of the emperor, and within a country where his grand title was by no means accompanied by as absolute a sway as in the provinces. The call came from the city of Bremen, in the North of Germany. His preaching here met with remarkable success; in a short time "the whole city reformed itself according to the rule of the holy gospel, and even rejected with scorn the priests and monks."[1] The bishop of Bremen naturally was incensed at this turn of affairs. He sought to intimidate Henry by threats of papal and imperial edicts and by assemblies of his numerous clergy, but it was of no avail. As for the bishop's command, the bold Reformer knew it to be his duty to obey God rather than man; and when they threatened violence to his person, he was protected by the magistrates, who were of his party.

In the midst of this successful work there came another call. The pastor of a flock of adherents of the Reformed faith in the towns or villages of Meldorf and Ditmarsum, at some distance from the city of Bremen, but within the jurisdiction of its bishop, urged him to come to his assistance to proclaim in these regions the word of God free from burdensome traditions of the papal Antichrist. Henry of Zutphen saw in this the finger of the Lord, and, though his friends of Bremen were reluctant

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 92.

to part with him, he cheerfully heeded the call. With many misgivings the Bremen brethren saw him go, for they were aware of the turbulence of the Ditmarsum peasantry.

On the first Monday of December, 1524, Henry arrived upon his new field of labor, but even before he had found an opportunity to preach, there was already in active operation a determined opposition to him. The prior of a monastery of Jacobin brethren made himself most conspicuous in these hostile movements. He first appealed to the rural authorities of the district, and he had no difficulty in gaining over these simple and unlearned people. They forbade the pastor of Meldorf and Ditmarsum, on pain of the severest penalties, to let Henry preach. It may readily be imagined, however, that no attention was paid to this order either by the pastor or by Henry; the latter preached with great power for several days twice each day. At once there was evident a marked influence for good among the people, and they began to suspect that what priests and monks had said to excite them against this holy man had been nothing but lies.

The prior of the Jacobins, perceiving that his previous efforts had failed, now resorted to more direct means of destroying the earnest preacher. He induced the inmates of another monastery in the neighborhood—that of the Gray Friars—to join him in an endeavor to crush the heretic, a

project which was but too welcome in this quarter. It was decided that it would be best to make a secret night-attack, seize upon the pastor of Meldorf and upon Henry, and burn the latter at the stake before the people who had been carried away by his preaching could know what had happened. To this end a number of peasants were gathered together; endeavors were made to arouse them to the proper degree of fanatical hatred against this enemy of the Church, and then they were informed of the enterprise and directed to aid in carrying it into effect. Finding that mere exhortation and priestly authority could not rouse them to the requisite pitch of excitement, a liberal quantity of beer was divided among them. Thus reinforced and in this frame of mind, they reached Meldorf about midnight, and made a violent assault upon the pastor's residence. The house was sacked and pillaged and the inmates were direly maltreated, but, the main object of their fury being Henry of Zutphen, the others were allowed to escape. They dragged him half naked from his bed, tied his hands upon his back, struck him with sticks, pricked him with their weapons, and forced him to walk barefoot over the icy ground from Meldorf to Ditmarsum. There they confined him during the remainder of the night in a cellar in a priest's house, under custody of a party of drunken and insulting peasants. An officer of the law came to him and inquired whether he desired

to be sent to the bishop of Bremen or would prefer to receive his punishment in Ditmarsum. Henry replied with calm dignity: "If I have done or taught anything that is unworthy of a Christian, you may take the punishment upon yourself." This was accepted as an expression of his desire to be put to death in Ditmarsum.

At about eight o'clock on the next morning, December 10, 1524, a party of peasants, directed and encouraged by the Jacobin prior and aided by a number of Gray Friars, tore Henry from his place of confinement and dragged him to the market-place. It was fully determined to burn him alive, and the preparations for the execution were soon completed. As he stood awaiting his doom his murderers observed the superfluous formality of pronouncing his sentence. A magistrate, in the hearing of the mob, spoke to about the following effect: "This evil-doer has preached against the mother of God and against Christian faith, for which cause I condemn and deliver him to the death by fire in the name of my gracious lord the bishop of Bremen." Henry replied: "I have not done this; but, O Lord, thy will be done." Then, lifting his eyes heavenward, he prayed: "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do. To thy name alone be the glory, O heavenly Father!" A Gray Friar now approached him to receive his confession, but Henry met him with the gentle

query, "My brother, have I ever done you any evil?" The monk giving a negative answer, the Reformer continued: "Why, then, should I confess to you or ask you to forgive me?" The friar was nonplussed, and quickly withdrew among the crowd.

The martyrdom was not delayed a moment longer. It began with an indiscriminate attack from all sides and with all sorts of instruments; one struck Henry upon the head with the flat of a sword, another gave him a blow with a hammer. The fagots of the pile could not be gotten to take fire, which was at once ascribed to the devil's agency. When, at last, the flames sprung up, Henry was lashed to a ladder, he meanwhile witnessing for Christ while they extended him upon it. To stop his discourse some struck him upon the lips with clenched fist; one man stepped violently upon his chest, while the fellow who was tying his neck to a rung of the ladder gave so hard a twist to the rope that the poor victim was nearly strangled—a mishap which would have been a mercy to him in the circumstances. The ladder was now raised to an erect position, and a soldier's pike was placed against a rung to support it; but the pike slipped from its position and the martyr fell with all his weight upon the sharp point, which passed through Henry's body, the ladder with its burden falling, at the same time, clear of the fire. As even yet life was not yet extinct and the

flames seemed to refuse to touch the victim, one of the murderers beat upon his exhausted breast with a hammer till the breath left it and he was no longer seen to move. The corpse was then thrown upon the smouldering embers, but, as it was not consumed by these, the next day the hands and the feet were burned and the scorched body was deposited in a grave, upon which the infuriated mob danced in a frenzy of inhuman glee.[1]

Thus expired Henry of Zutphen, the first native of Dutch soil who suffered for his Master when the persecutions of the Reformation began to rage. The details of the martyrdom are almost too revolting for recital, yet it may be wholesome to look upon what deeds have been done in the name of religion. It was not only death which stared the Reformers in the face. Their sincerity and hardihood in the faith were confronted with death in its most excruciating, prolonged and horrific forms, restricted, sometimes, by no laws, human or divine. That they endured unto this bitter, bitter end in spite of all is to us for an example, and was to them the earnest of the crown of life.

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 92–94.

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN PISTORIUS: HIS LIFE AND LABORS.

WOERDEN is but a little city, with a population of not quite five thousand, in the province of South Holland, near the borders of Utrecht. It is a place quite unvisited by the ordinary tourist; to the student of history, however, it is a shrine not to be neglected. A walk of about five minutes brings us from the station to a narrow stream, its banks lined with ancient trees. We can hardly be made to believe that this is the river Rhine, yet the maps of Holland assure us that it is. We soon cross a bridge over a canal at right angles to the river, which formerly served as a moat, and what formerly were the walls are here, as in almost every other Dutch city, converted into beautiful promenades and parks with undulating walks or lawns and planted with fine umbrageous trees.

A walk of a few rods along the main street—not very wide and slightly winding—brings us to a principal cross-street. It leads, by means of a boldly-curving stone bridge, across the Rhine as it flows through the city. Soon we stand looking with

interest at an exceedingly quaint, old-fashioned town-hall, and near it is the Reformed church—a huge building surrounded by lofty trees and facing one of the boulevards, or parks, formed out of the old fortifications. This church, however, is not the one we want; we have an idea that the Lutheran church must contain the object of our search. We are directed to it; it is near where formerly stood the Leyden gate, now a mere name. We find it, are shown its curious interior, and then are taken into an "upper room," a sort of vestry or consistory-room. At once we discover that we are in the right place. Two oil-paintings adorn the wall. One represents Martin Luther; the other, John Pistorius or John de Bakker.

John, who later in life received the appellation of "de Bakker" ("the baker")—or, in more learned form, "Pistorius"—was the son of the *koster* ("sexton" or "sacristan") of the "great" church of Woerden, which is now the Reformed church of that place. This little city, therefore, enjoys the distinction of being the birthplace of the first martyr of the Reformation whose blood fell upon the actual soil of Holland, and who was martyred for laboring in the gospel within her borders; for Henry of Zutphen, while a native of what was subsequently the republic or kingdom of Holland, labored and died upon foreign soil.

The position of sacristan, or sexton, was not such

a humble one at that time (nor is it now) in Holland, as we might suppose. The father of John Pistorius was of a good family, had studied in the same schools with Erasmus and still enjoyed his personal friendship. He destined his son for the Church. At the age of twelve John was sent to Utrecht to begin his studies. Possessing a fine, clear voice, he was employed by the priests of the cathedral church to sing in the choir; this somewhat interfered with his studies, but after three years he abandoned the choir and devoted himself exclusively to preparation for the priesthood. His teacher was John Rhodius, a man of great learning with decidedly evangelical tendencies, for he was one of the translators of the New Testament which was published in the vernacular at Amsterdam in 1525.[1] The teacher's views did not remain without their effect upon the pupil, and even at this tender age he was suspected and hated for his supposed sympathy with Luther's doctrine. His father, alarmed at this state of things, removed John at once from Utrecht and sent him to the University of Louvain; here he came into contact with the great Erasmus, his father's friend. When he had reached the proper age for ordination, he returned to Utrecht to be consecrated to the priesthood. It was not at all in accordance with his own wishes that he took this office upon him, but, as he declared at his trial, entirely to gratify

[1] Hansen's *Reformed Church in the Netherlands*, p. 30.

his father—or, rather, in obedience to his father's peremptory command.

John was appointed to serve in the church of his native town, and took especial pleasure in the instruction of the people. Taking for his text-book a catechism authorized by the Church of Rome, he allowed his interpretations to be guided entirely by the evangelical views he had imbibed early in life and had never outgrown. The authorities of the Church at the episcopal see of Utrecht soon learned of his conduct, and he was ordered to come to the ecclesiastical capital and render an account. He refused to obey. As Woerden was situated within the province of Holland, the provincial court at The Hague was appealed to, and John was accused before it of contumacy. As a consequence, the commander of the fortress of Woerden was directed to arrest him and cast him into prison. But he did not remain here long, for the burghers of the city were indignant at these summary proceedings against a resident and native townsman at the instance of accusers in a neighboring province and in direct violation of their civil privileges. There was no one found bold enough to repair to Woerden and lay a formal accusation against the evangelical priest, and hence, after a while, Pistorius was released from prison on condition that he would produce himself whenever wanted for trial.

The ecclesiastics at Utrecht were enraged at the

escape of their victim. Although impotent to injure him directly, they knew how to annoy him in various ways, and they embittered his life to such a degree that he fled the country and went into voluntary exile. He journeyed to Wittenberg that he might sit at the feet of Luther; and it is interesting to notice how plainly the results of that visit remained apparent in Woerden for many years after the martyr's death. When the days of Romish supremacy in Holland had gone by and the Reformed Church was everywhere established, this city remained a stronghold of Lutheranism, and so intolerant and vehemently sectarian had the spirit of the inhabitants become in 1579, that one of their preachers, John Scaliger—who must not for a moment be identified with either of the world-renowned scholars of that name—no doubt encouraged by the well-known sentiments of his hearers, ventured to go so far as to denounce preachers and members of the Reformed or State-Church in the most extravagant terms; even the States-General and William of Orange came in for a great share of this habitual abuse. As a result, he, together with a colleague, was deposed and forbidden to preach within the province of Holland. The use of the "great" church, hitherto exclusively theirs, was also at this time forbidden to the Lutherans. They were, therefore, compelled to build another house of worship, and henceforth the two confessions were preached

side by side in the little city.[1] Thus it is readily seen that the Lutheran church in Woerden to-day bears witness to the depth of the impression made by the master-mind of Luther upon the young Pistorius during his brief visit, and is a monument to the faithfulness and power wherewith he conveyed that impression to those of his native town who through his preaching were led to accept the doctrines of the Reformation. Hence the Lutheran church of Woerden is the shrine where we must honor the memory of this proto-martyr of Holland, and hence his portrait, as founder of this church, is appropriately hung by the side of that of the great Luther himself, as the founder of their sect.

Confirmed in the newer and better faith, and encouraged by the lion-hearted leader of the Reformation to preach it unto priest-ridden and darkened souls at every hazard, Pistorius returned to Woerden. The authorities at Utrecht at once renewed their opposition, demanding his appearance before them to answer a charge of heresy. On refusing to appear, he was sentenced to go to Rome and to remain three years in exile. Heeding the sentence as little as the summons, to elude an attempt to secure his person by violence he left Woerden and went all through the province of Holland, preaching everywhere the saving doctrines of grace. He

[1] Brandt, *Hist. der Reform.*, Vol. I. pp. 662, 663.

then settled down once more in his native town, abandoned the priestly office, married a wife and resorted to secular occupations to earn his support. He followed the trade of baker for a while, but performed also the labors of agriculture as opportunity offered to win for himself and his wife a respectable sustenance. Nevertheless, the dearest object of his life was not forgotten. In the evenings, on the Sabbath—whenever he had a moment of leisure—he instructed men in the truths of salvation and sought to rescue them from the superstition of Rome. While thus occupied there came across his path the same dark shadow of Romish corruption that had aroused the great Reformer of Wittenberg. Learning nothing from the past, regardless of the convulsions that had shaken Europe after the first shameless sale of indulgences had awakened the lion within Luther, hungry only for the gold of Christians and luring their souls to destruction for the sake of gaining that—so "the dome of St. Peter might rise a little nearer to the sky"—the pope insisted upon a renewed effort to secure the purchase of his indulgences throughout Christendom.

The movement reached also the little city of Woerden. Pistorius at once resumed the priestly functions and entered the confessional. It was here that Luther combated this outrage upon Christianity, and here, too, was the most effective battlefield, for

to the priest in the hour of confession the infernal license of the indulgence was presented as a receipted bill for the advance payment of penalties that would otherwise have to be inflicted. Pistorius declined the customary fees, and hence induced a greater number of people to come to him. He would then refuse to honor the papal indulgence, and would impress upon the hearts of men the wickedness of such a scheme and the real way of obtaining pardon for sins. Naturally, these proceedings excited anew the enmity of the priests and the ecclesiastical authorities. He was accused before the town council and summoned to answer before them the charges brought against him. He consented to plead his cause before a number of the clergy, whom he reduced to silence by his unanswerable appeals to Scripture. One of these, however, finding himself outdone in argument, resorted to a never-failing expedient. He wrote to the regent Margaret an elaborate report of the process, attested by the town secretary. By Margaret's order Pistorius was immediately seized, conveyed to The Hague and consigned to prison to await his trial.

CHAPTER V.

JOHN PISTORIUS: HIS DEATH.

THE HAGUE, the city where the king of Holland holds his court and where the Parliament meets, aspires to be the most elegant city of the kingdom; and certainly the most beautiful and delightful part of the city is that where the "Vyver" is situated. This is a large pond whose silvery waters on the one side reflect the Parliament houses, rising directly from their surface, while on two other sides it is bordered by quays adorned with flower-beds and shaded by rows of noble trees. Beyond the trees are seen the splendid palaces of some of the richest and most aristocratic citizens. If we leave the court whereon the Parliament buildings face and proceed along the adjoining or "outer" court to the head of the "Vyver," or if we approach the latter along the tree-lined quay or street opposite the Parliament, we shall in either case come upon a grim old building in a shady quadrangle to which the sun has no access, and where his cheer would evidently be of no avail. This is the *Gevangen Poort*, or "Prison-Gate." Dire scenes have here

been witnessed at various periods of Dutch history, and here John Pistorius was confined in the early part of the year 1525.

This building has long since been abandoned as a prison, the last person who was confined here being now a very aged man once high in the employ of the State (we are assured by the guide), who was brought to this unfortunate pass by a youthful indiscretion while at the university. The interior, therefore, is now open to the inspection of the public. We had not expected to find the actual prison or cell where Pistorius was confined. No guide-books had made mention of it, no history that we had read had specified its exact location in The Hague. It was accordingly with a feeling of strange excitement that we followed the guide when he proposed to show the very spot where John Pistorius had spent several dreary months. Up to the third story he took us along a winding staircase with solid oaken steps; then we were conducted through a narrow corridor on one side of which were arranged cells that had much the appearance of cages or stalls for cattle. On the side of the door, and from a distance of about four feet above the floor to the ceiling, they were provided with a network of powerful iron bars crossing one another at right angles and leaving spaces perhaps four inches square. Thus the passer-by could have a full view of the interior, the light coming through windows high up

in the opposite wall of the corridor. Such was the cell of John Pistorius. It was located at the farther end of the corridor, the part of the hall upon which it opened being itself shut off from the remainder by a stout oaken door. We passed through this doorway and then through the cell-door into the cell. It was almost totally dark. The guide lighted a candle and showed us a hole broken through the brick wall, but closed by an impenetrable partition of solid oak against which the bricks rested. He said that Pistorius had dug the hole with his fingers. Holding the light up to the plastering, he pointed to figures and words drawn and written in blood, and alleged that the martyr in his despair had traced these there. He called our attention to the fact that three sets of grating in the window before us, cut through a wall eighty-four inches thick, and the grating of the cell itself, prevented the prisoner's escape in that direction, and bade us count the six successive immensely thick oaken doors that shut him out from liberty.

The sight of the very surroundings which had brought direst misery to this historic character so long ago was deeply impressive, but it was especially important to us, because now we could clearly understand a circumstance of which mention is made in every account of this martyrdom which we have read—namely, that on his way to the stake Pistorius, passing the prison, addressed words of comfort to

his brethren in the faith there confined, and was answered by exhortations to firmness and songs of praise. It always seemed inexplicable to us that prisoners should have been confined in a manner so convenient for exchanging conversations with passers-by in the street, but it now seemed very plain. In the cell next to Pistorius, on the same corridor, were confined six or more persons eminent for learning or character, and also on the charge of favoring the heretical doctrines. On being led to execution Pistorius must necessarily have passed by this cell, and the open grating already described gave abundant opportunity for the interchange of greetings such as are recorded in the various histories.

In this dark, dismal cell, then, Pistorius languished for several months. He was not even permitted to remain there alone during all this period. At one time he was compelled to share it with ten of the vilest and lowest criminals, swarming with disgusting vermin, coarse and blasphemous in their language. He proclaimed a saving gospel to them, however, and many even of such companions he was instrumental in leading to Christ and his service. So dreadful was the condition of his cell toward the end of his imprisonment that the inquisitor who had gone up to confer with him there hurried back after a few moments, almost choked by the vile odors he had breathed and unable to restrain a violent fit of vomiting. It is a question whether this part of the

martyrdom might not more truly deserve the name than the brief moments of torture at the stake.

At last, four months after he had been brought to The Hague, on the 14th of July, 1525, Pistorius was confronted with the inquisitors. A few unimportant conferences had taken place before, but now began the real trial. Five dignitaries—three ecclesiastical, the real inquisitors, and two laymen, a burgomaster of The Hague and the procurator-fiscal—were appointed to conduct the examination. It lasted that forenoon and all the afternoon till dark. The next day another session was held. Every argument that these men could think of failed to move him from his purpose to oppose the errors of Rome. Every appeal to Scripture authority resulted in triumph for the prisoner and in confusion to the inquisitors, who invariably sought to shift the argument adroitly over to the more convenient ground of the authority of the Church, but were not permitted to do so by the Reformer without instant exposure. He placed the right of the clergy to marry upon unassailable Scripture grounds, and demanded of them which was more likely, in the matter of practical results, to preserve the purity of the clergy—an honorable marriage or the unlimited profligacy in which many were known to live, but which was pardoned lightly at every confession, only to be indulged in again. To this unanswerable and legitimate *argumentum ad hominem* a

coarse reply was made at a later period of the trial by the president of the Mechlin court, to the effect that he wished Pistorius had committed the crime in question ten times over rather than have married, for then he would have given them infinitely less trouble.

After the examination which took place on the 15th of July, Pistorius was remanded back to prison for a month. Meanwhile, the regent of the Netherlands, Count Hoogstraaten, stadtholder of Holland, and the whole privy-council of the emperor Charles, had come to The Hague. To the three ecclesiastical inquisitors—who were also professors of theology at Louvain—was now added the president of the supreme court at Mechlin. Four eminent lawyers were also invited to attend the next examination. This took place in the presence of these august personages in the great hall of the court at The Hague. It effected no more satisfactory results than the preceding trials. Pistorius remained firm. He was accordingly condemned to be strangled and his body to be burned at the stake.

On the 15th of September, 1525, a large platform was erected in the centre of the so-called "inner court" (*Binnenhof*) in The Hague. The present Parliament buildings were formerly the residence of the counts of Holland, and later were occupied by the princes of Orange as chiefs of the Dutch republic, and hence received the name of *Prinsenhof*,

or "princes' palace." A martyrdom—political, indeed, but largely the result of bitterness produced by controversies in the Protestant Church of Holland—was suffered here almost a century later, when on this same Binnenhof the head of Barneveld fell beneath the executioner's sword. Now, in 1525, various eminent ecclesiastical dignitaries clad in their full regalia, the professors from Louvain, the president of the imperial court, Count Hoogstraaten and the regent Margaret were seated in great state upon this platform. The ceremonies of the degradation of Pistorius from the priestly office were performed with their usual pomp. He was then clad in a yellow tunic; a fool's cap of the same gaudy hue was placed upon his head, and thus arrayed he was led to the place of execution. This was located within a stone's throw of the prison gate, and was familiarly known as *het Groene Zoodje* ("the green sod"). Here, during several generations, was the spot where criminals breathed their last on the block or on the gallows, while it may now be identified by a stone post standing not far from the banks of the Vyver.

Arrived here, Pistorius calmly mounted the pile of fagots and placed himself firmly against the iron stake in the centre. He adjusted the garrote around his neck with his own hands, and exclaimed, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Death is swallowed up in victory through

Christ!" With a final prayer upon his lips for his enemies and for his own soul, he resigned himself to the executioner's hands, and was strangled to death. The fire was then kindled, and his body was consumed to ashes. A contemporary writes of his death, "One would have thought from the appearance of his countenance after the strangling that our martyr had fallen into a sweet sleep; and this was really so, for he lives now, freed from all misery, with Christ, who since his confession of the name of Christ even unto his death never forsook him. May this strength also be imparted to us even until the end by that God who is to be praised above all through all eternity! Amen."[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 100–128. The account here is the history of this martyrdom written by Gnapheus, rector of a Latin school at The Hague, and a friend and fellow-prisoner of Pistorius; it was originally published in Latin. Brandt, in his *Historie der Reformatie*, devotes some pages to this martyr. There is also an interesting account of John Pistorius in Rev. M. G. Hansen's *Reformed Church in the Netherlands*, pp. 29–34.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WIDOW WENDELMOET KLAASDOCHTER.

IN the service of Christ there is "neither male nor female." The male child alone was formally consecrated, the men were directed to go up to the great feasts at Jerusalem under the Jewish dispensation; but in the Christian Church membership knows no such distinction. We are all equally in Christ and he is in us; the Holy Spirit gives wisdom and zeal to men and to women, and sanctifies activity in both.

From the glorious army of martyrs the women have not been excluded. We read with mingled sentiments of horror and admiration of the frightful tortures so heroically endured by Blandina during the persecution of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, in France, under the emperor Antoninus, in the year 179. With equal courage the women and the maidens of Alexandria or Carthage sought the crown of martyrdom, until the bishops were compelled to check the undue eagerness wherewith the painful distinction was courted. We might have expected that the women of Holland would be found among

the ranks of the martyrs of the Reformation. That same spirit which made Amazons of the women of Haarlem in their defence of the city would enlist to fight the battles of the Lord Jesus Christ those who, like Mary and Martha, loved and followed him among the women of this devoted land.

In the province of North Holland, on the shores of the Zuyder Zee, lies the small city of Monnikendam. Seen from a great distance across the green and level country, it peeps at you through its walls of living verdure—the lofty trees that stand in double rows where formerly its ramparts frowned. On the side of the sea the town coyly retires from direct contact with it at the base of a shallow bay, but from its dykes or housetops can be seen that Paradise of Oddity, the island of Marken, lying far out and seemingly afloat upon the Zuyder Zee. Monnikendam was the birthplace of Wendelmoet Klaasdochter—or Wendelmoet, the daughter of Klaas—the first woman of Holland, and perhaps the first woman of Europe, who was martyred in the cause of the Reformation. History makes no mention of her till it describes her as a widow of Monnikendam and finds her incarcerated in the citadel of Woerden. Remains of that castle or citadel we thought we discovered on our visit to Woerden. Here, too, Pistorius had been confined. On the 15th of November, 1527, she was conveyed, a prisoner, to The Hague, there to be tried for

heresy, and two days later Count Hoogstraaten, the stadtholder of Holland, arrived from Brussels in order to preside at her examination. Surely these cases of heresy were deemed of exceeding grave importance, since the highest dignitaries in Church and State must needs attend the trials of even the humblest offenders. But no more effective method for giving prominence, and therefore widespreading influence, to their martyrdom could possibly have been adopted. The injury which the persecutors thus did to their own cause seemed a veritable judgment of God upon their actions.

On the 18th of November the stadtholder and the supreme court of Holland, in full assembly, caused the widow Wendelmoet to appear before them. Nothing daunted by the august array wherewith she was confronted, she made answer plainly and firmly to the charges made against her. The questions put to her were met by replies which for quickness and pointedness might almost be called sacred repartees. She was admonished to renounce her heretical opinions and threatened with the stake if she did not, while some one insinuated that she only despised death because she had never tasted it. "If this power of death has been given you from above," she said, "I am prepared to suffer. True, I *have* never tasted death, but I *shall* never taste of it, for Christ has said, 'If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.'"

The specific accusation against Wendelmoet was that she had spoken sacrilegiously against the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and profanely treated one of the elements; for this she had been cast into prison and placed upon trial for her life. Naturally, therefore, an important part of the examination had reference to the sacrament and her opinions regarding it. The inquiries upon this point she encountered with the prompt and pungent declaration, "I look upon your Host as mere bread or dough; but if you consider it to be your God, then I tell you *that it is your devil.*" It was announced to her, accordingly, after a few less important questions, that, since she remained steadfast in her blasphemous unbelief as touching the Host, sentence of death must be pronounced upon her. She was, therefore, urged to prepare herself for this extremity by full confession to the priest, in order to obtain absolution. She was again ready with a telling scriptural answer. "Even now," she said, "I am no more alive, for I am crucified with Christ, yet Christ liveth within me by his Spirit. And I have made confession to Christ the Lord, who has taken away all my sins." Nevertheless, she begged that if she had offended any one she might be forgiven of such.

The quick-witted and undaunted woman was now remanded to prison and placed in the stocks; here she was exposed to annoyances and question-

ings by the populace. Among others, a simple-minded woman addressed her, lamenting her fate and saying, "Why not think what you please, but keep still about it? Then you wouldn't need to die like this." The heroic Christian gently answered, "Dear sister, I am commanded and called to speak forth what I believe; therefore I am not permitted to keep silence."

The next day but one was Sunday. A platform, as usual, was erected upon the Binnenhof, and before the judges, thereupon seated with imposing dignity, the humble widow was bidden to stand and receive her sentence. After a futile attempt to obtain a promise to recant the sentence was read. It was to the effect that, since she had been proved in error regarding her belief in the sacrament and persisted in her blasphemous language against the Host, she was found guilty of heresy. Now took place that mockery so oft repeated since, which always formed a part of the *auto-da-fé* in Spain —the spiritual judge handing her over formally to the civil judge, to do with her what seemed unto him lawful and commending her to his clemency. This ecclesiastic then withdrew from the council, for by the law he could not, as a clerical member, take part in the deliberations involving a capital sentence. The result of these mock deliberations might readily be foreseen: having been proved guilty of heresy, she was declared guilty of death.

The chancellor of the province therefore read the civil sentence that she should be burned to ashes and her goods confiscated.

Wendelmoet was now led away to execution. A wretched monk troubled her exceedingly on the way by continually pressing a crucifix upon her that she might touch it with her lips, but she indignantly pushed the idolatrous symbol away from her. Arrived at the stake, a holy peace soothed her heart and made her countenance beam with a cheerful hope and an undoubted assurance of salvation. The sentence of the stake in those earlier days usually included the merciful provision that death by strangling should precede the burning of the body. This part of the sentence being now about to be executed upon her, she closed her eyes as if disposing herself for sleep, and her heroic soul was released from the body of clay. As soon as it was ascertained that she was dead the wood was kindled and her form was reduced to ashes.

Thus the 20th of November, 1527, was made memorable. A "mother in Israel," an "elect lady," had maintained her faith before the great ones of the land and refused to deny her Lord even when confronted with the fear of violent death. She had added a woman's name to the list of those martyrs whose blood was to fertilize this soil for the vigorous growth of the Reformed Church of Holland.

CHAPTER VII.

WILLIAM OF ZWOLLE.

THE city of Zwolle is situated in the province of Overyssel. To one perfectly familiar with the composition of the kingdom of Holland it is somewhat embarrassing to speak of Hollanders when he means natives of provinces other than those of North and South Holland proper. The people of these provinces themselves somewhat resent being called "Hollanders," for they think only of the two provinces thus designated when that term is used. The name of the kingdom in Dutch is "Netherland" (*Nederland*), and their own name for the people of the entire country is "Netherlanders." Still, in English and other tongues, the term "Holland" is so generally applied to the whole kingdom that it seems best, after the slight justice of these explanations, to continue to consider as "martyrs of Holland" those who were natives of any of the provinces constituting the republic of old and the kingdom at present.

At Zwolle, then, in Overyssel, was born the martyr who forms the subject of our present chapter.

A circumstance like this—to have been the birthplace of one of these early witnesses for the Reformed faith—seems to us to invest any town or village with interest. We know nothing of William's life at Zwolle, we cannot look upon the house wherein he first drew breath, yet the association of names is enough, and makes the city hold a prominent place in our recollections of Holland.

In itself Zwolle is a city well worth a visit. It is perhaps one of the most beautiful of the kingdom as regards its suburbs and surroundings. Leaving the station, one walks along a broad graveled lane with brick sidewalks for pedestrians and lined on either side with rows of tall bushes and young trees. This lane soon leads us to a wide canal, or former moat, stretching away to the right and the left of us, winding about the city with the sharp curves necessitated by what were once the angles of the fortifications. Here we involuntarily pause, viewing with delight the clear, glassy stream, its reflections of modern villas, its tree-bordered and grassy banks. To our right we perceive an ancient town-gate terminating in a lofty roof adorned with no less than five pointed turrets, the central turret provided with the never-failing clock and chimes.

This relic of antiquity, which may have existed in the time of our martyr, naturally leads the thought to two other circumstances of an early date

which certainly must have had an influence upon William in his early youth. Scarce three miles from this city stood the monastery of Mount St. Agnes, where Thomas à Kempis lived for sixty-four years, and here he wrote his imperishable *Imitation of Christ.* Thomas could scarcely have been dead when William of Zwolle was born, and such a book as this must have come to the knowledge of the latter; for it is also to be remembered that in Zwolle was located one of those remarkable schools conducted by the Brethren of the Common Lot, and William, who afterward became a man of science and learning, most assuredly began his years of study in such a school, as was the case with Erasmus. Among these almost evangelical, spiritually-minded brethren the *Imitation* must have found a ready welcome, and was doubtless hailed as a most useful aid in the religious education of the youth under their care.

The first fact in William's history that comes prominently before us is that he enjoyed the distinguished favor of Christian II., king of Denmark. This sovereign reigned from 1513 to 1523, and we are told that he appointed William superintendent or governor of his fortifications.[1] Why should such a position have been offered a man whose claim to memory depends upon a martyrdom for religious beliefs which he could defend with dialectic skill?

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 140.

Possibly he had become noted at the University of Louvain—where almost all the scholars of the Netherlands received their academic training—for attainments and proficiency in mathematical science, and for this cause his services were required by the Danish king to construct or perfect the fortifications within his realm. Whatsoever were the reasons for his elevation, whatever his peculiar office there signified, he found in Denmark that which was far better than all earthly distinctions or the favor of the princes of this world.

There was no country of Europe where the Reformation made such rapid strides as here. The successor of Christian II., Frederick I., whose reign began in 1523, openly embraced the new faith, and showed himself vastly in advance of his age by issuing an edict tolerating equally the Reformed and the Romish churches. Under these influences the truth of God soon made its way into the heart of the high functionary of the Crown, the skilled and celebrated engineer who had been called from a foreign country to these important duties in Denmark. The teachings of earlier years, the pious meditations of A Kempis and the practical and consistent Christianity of the Brethren of the Common Lot were but the prophecy and preparation of the better apprehension of Christ and his gospel which Luther had been preaching in the ears of Christendom. William warmly professed an agreement with the

Reformer's doctrines. Nor did he do this under the fostering care of a sovereign's smiles only: he seems to have returned to his native country after his patron's successor had mounted the throne, and within these more perilous regions, trembling beneath the rod of their sovereign, Charles V., he none the less freely spoke of his new-found faith; he witnessed to the power of that faith to save men without the superfluous paraphernalia that needlessly and ruinously encumbered the faith of the papal Church. As a result of this course he very soon found himself in the clutches of the Inquisition. By an act of willful despotism breaking through every right and every privilege previously granted, the noted Charles the Bold—an ancestor of Charles V.—had placed the supreme court of the provinces at the city of Mechlin, halfway between Antwerp and Brussels. Thus natives or residents could no longer, as formerly, be tried in their own province, but must be removed to a court at a distance from their surroundings. Hence, to Mechlin, on a charge of heresy, was William of Zwolle brought in the year 1529. It was at the instance of the theologians of Louvain that the charge was preferred and the arrest made; to them, accordingly, was committed the duty of conducting the examination.

We are in possession of certain details of this trial which will not only give us an interesting insight into the modes of conducting these proceedings

against heretics, but will also afford an instructive view of the frivolous questions that were put to them, yet the answer to which might result either in acquittal or in a death amid frightful torments.

William of Zwolle was required to answer in writing, at the end of twelve days, a series of eight articles, also submitted in written form. These were as follows: "1. Whether a Christian is at liberty to take an oath when the magistrate demands it of him. 2. What is the extent of the authority of the pope. 3. Whether there is not a purgatory where souls after this life are tormented. 4. Whether departed saints ought to be adored. 5. Whether it is not sufficient to receive the sacrament under one form. 6. Whether it is lawful to eat butter, eggs or meat on days when it is prohibited. 7. Whether those who have made vows of celibacy are obliged to keep their vows. 8. Whether men ought not to obey the commands of the Church and the emperor which forbid them to buy, possess and read Lutheran books."[1]

It will not be necessary to mention the several answers the prisoner made to these propositions, as it is too obvious in this our day what he must have said from a scriptural standpoint. In the matter of purgatory, he said he would rather perish than believe in one: a sincere Christian, when he dies, is assured of salvation, while one who believes not is

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 140.

condemned; hence masses for the soul can avail for no one. To the seventh point he replied that he could not discover in Scripture that a state of celibacy was enjoined of God—that, therefore, this was a merely human ordinance, because without the support of his word. Hence it was perfectly lawful to abandon the monastic life.

The question in regard to Luther's books and their prohibition by church and civil law had in it some such covert and subtle assault as that of the scribes and Pharisees when they asked the Lord concerning the tribute to Cæsar. The first placard, published in 1521, had been succeeded by a second one, even more severe, published on September 25, 1525, ten days after the martyrdom of John Pistorius, and this had been followed by a third one on July 17, 1526. The one of 1525 forbade public or private gatherings to read or to speak about the Gospels, the Epistles of Paul, and other spiritual writings. Stimulated by this new deliverance from so high a quarter, persecutions increased. "In Holland the scaffold began to smoke at a great rate," says Brandt, in his quiet manner, "by the zeal of those who were better calculated to burn heretics than to dispute with them." But in this same year arose the unfortunate sacramental quarrel between Luther and Zwinglius "which retarded the progress of the Reformation much more than all the devices, placards, dungeons, swords, gallows and stakes where-

with the papacy armed itself against it."[1] The placard of 1526, after repeating the prohibitions of previous placards, specified "the books of Luther, Pomeranus, Carlstadt, Melanchthon, Œcolampadius, Franciscus Lamberti, Justus Jonas, and others of his adherents or sympathizers."[2] This, therefore, bore directly upon the case of William of Zwolle, and it was sought to place him in a position of disobedience to the scriptural command to be subject to the higher powers. He replied to the question submitted to him, "I have read these [books], not because I despised the authority of the emperor, but only that I might know what was good in them and what evil, and especially that I might distinguish the truth from human doctrine and imaginations, so that I might reject these."[3]

The result of the investigation could easily be foreseen: the unpardonable crime of heresy was readily proved against William from the expression of these sentiments. The inquisitors delivered him over to the secular arm, and the sentence against heresy was executed upon him. He was burned at the stake on October 20, 1529.[4] No particulars of his martyrdom have come down to us, but during the interval between the close of the trial by the inquisitors and his execution he composed in prison a

[1] Brandt. [2] Brandt, *Histor. der Reform.*, Vol. I. p. 100.
[3] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 141.
[4] *Ibid.*; Brandt, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

more detailed statement of his answers to the several points submitted to him, and this document, which gave evidence of much learning and piety, was published by the Reformer Bugenhagen (or Pomeranus) at Wittenberg.[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 141.

CHAPTER VIII.

TEUNIS TEEKSEN OF NAARDEN.

IN our previous accounts of martyrs it has abundantly appeared that their trials were conducted on an elaborate scale in the presence of the highest dignitaries of the land, and lasted sometimes through months of time. A fourth placard was signed by the emperor at Brussels on October 14, 1529, a few days before the martyrdom last noticed; this sought to obviate the tediousness of these proceedings. It was ordered "that those who were empowered to execute this placard should go about it without long process, but as summarily as in reasonableness and fairness this might be done."[1] The punishment of heretics was thus to mend its pace and descend more swiftly, if not more surely, and in order to secure their persons a bait was held out to the accuser: the confiscated property of the heretic was to be divided equally between the State and the informant.

But the very frequency wherewith these placards were issued, since each was a virtual repetition of the other, with few additional provisions, showed that

[1] Brandt, *His. der Refor.*, I. p. 103.

special urgency on the part of the emperor was necessary to ensure the carrying out of the behests of the Inquisition. The hunting down and killing of heretics were extremely unpopular in the northern provinces; often the very officers of the government were in sympathy with the victims they were compelled to prosecute and condemn. We will find an illustration of this in the case now before us.

The next martyr whose name has been preserved from oblivion from among the hundreds who then suffered directs our attention to the city of Naarden, in North Holland, this being his native town. Naarden is a very little city, but it has an important place in history, for it gave occasion to one of the worst exhibitions of perfidy and cruelty which have disgraced the name of Spain. On their march to the siege of Haarlem, in 1572, the Spaniards here met with but a momentary resistance to their demand for surrender. The citizens repented, the foe was admitted, pardon was pledged, and all seemed peace, when the horde of butchers fell upon a gathering of unarmed citizens crowding a small church and massacred every one of them. But forty of all the inhabitants escaped the murderous assaults which were then made all through the town. When these inhuman wretches left the city, it was totally depopulated and a mass of blackened ruins. To-day the building which stands where the church stood is still indi-

cated by a representation of the scene of carnage which here took place, carved in stone, in partial relief, over the main entrance. Here, then, was a wholesale martyrdom endured by an entire city. No doubt the adherence to the Reformation which provoked it was the result of the teachings and labors of the two men who years before had been added to the list of Dutch martyrs from the burghers of this town, for, besides the subject of this chapter, we read of one Antony Fredericks, who in 1525 preached the Reformed doctrines in Naarden with such success that among other prominent converts he counted a Romish priest and pastor and the assistant rector of a Latin school.[1] In a marginal note Brandt adds, "This one was subsequently put to death." This is all the record we have of him.

Teunis Teeksen had distinguished himself by his accomplishments and his learning during a long course of study at the University of Louvain, in Belgium. On his return to Naarden he abandoned himself to a life of reckless self-indulgence, engaging in a round of unlawful pleasures, the hero and leader of a large circle of boon-companions.[2] Early in the year 1530 he met with a singular experience. In company with several of his friends, presumably bent upon some scheme of wild revelry, he was proceeding

[1] Brandt, *His. der Ref.*, Vol. I. p. 92.

[2] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 142.

along the road outside the town, when he was suddenly struck to the earth by an invisible hand; he was picked up for dead and was carried to his home by four of his companions. On recovering consciousness the evil of his course of life struck him with painful force; he accepted the singular attack of bodily illness as a visitation and warning of Providence, and resolved to reform his conduct. But a greater change than even this implied was also to be wrought in his experience. As Brandt remarks with suggestive brevity, "after this he begat an abhorrence of wickedness, and at the same time of the papacy." He had pursued his studies with a view to the priesthood; when he had mended his ways, he did not carry out this original intention, but utilized his talents and learning in the study of the pure word of God. His religious convictions became one with those of the Reformed faith, and he openly joined their ranks. Previous to his studies at the university he had learned the trade of boxmaker, and he now resumed this handicraft, freely distributing his earnings among the poor, as he possessed a small fortune sufficient for his support. To these ministrations among the needy in temporal things he joined the ministration of the truth of God, and he soon was eagerly sought by a large following, who learned from him the way of God's salvation as he had been constrained by the Holy Spirit to accept it himself. He directed his

teachings more particularly against the Romish doctrine of the Mass, and also made prominent his dislike of the multitudinous holy days appointed in honor of the respective saints. He became, of course, at once the object of hatred and persecution on the part of the adherents of Rome. Complaints were made against him to the authorities, and he was cited to give an account of his conduct, and to repair to Amsterdam for that purpose. But throughout we are struck with the astonishing leniency wherewith he was treated. If we read the placards that were then flooding the country, which had followed one another within a year or two in such rapid succession that the ink of the one was scarce dry before another was already promulgated, we should have expected a very summary and severe disposal of Teeksen's case. Such would have happened in the southern provinces; such celerity of judgment was but too frequently witnessed in all parts of the land forty years later, when Alva's rule of terror oppressed the people. But now it was happily different.

Teeksen went to Amsterdam accompanied by a friend; they traveled together, with no officer of justice to interfere with their movements, as if they had gone on an errand of business or pleasure. Teeksen reported himself at the house of the procurator-general, whose name was Brunt. He informed him that he was the person from Naarden whom

Brunt had summoned to appear before him, and "that he had come partly to defend the truth and partly to convince his accusers of error." A long and most amicable conversation ensued between this high dignitary of the court of Holland and the accused, in the course of which the former did not hesitate to impart in confidence to the heretic before him that he shared his opinions about the Mass, but that he could not avow them and retain his position. He then told Teeksen to return to his home and await a further summons.

With renewed zeal and confidence Teeksen addressed himself to the dissemination of a pure gospel. The Mass, indulgences, pilgrimages, adoration of saints, were attacked and denounced by him with vigorous and convincing eloquence, and the spread of the Reformed faith was much promoted. This, added to his easy escape from the hands of the civil judge, sorely incensed the enemies of the truth. At times the zealous preacher would be met by bands of men who pelted him with stones, but, finding that this had not the desired effect, they once more laid accusations against him before the court of Holland. The procurator-general, being requested to summon the bold heretic, dared not refuse to heed this demand, and despatched a constable to Naarden to conduct him to The Hague. But even now he sent a private message by the very officer who was to arrest him, advising him to quit Naarden, so as to

avoid giving offence to his enemies, and thereby escape a trial. Teeksen, however, could not heed such advice, and cheerfully rode along with the constable to The Hague. He told his friends that he felt the hour of his sacrifice was near, but that he rejoiced therein, for he would the sooner be at the marriage-feast of the Lamb, where Christ, the Bridegroom, was awaiting him. Arrived at The Hague, he was at once conducted to the Prison-Gate and secured in one of the cells. While thus confined he was allowed free intercourse with any one who wished to converse with him; this could readily be done by reason of the manner in which the cells were constructed, as described in a former chapter. Accordingly, he was visited by many persons of all ranks, even by noblemen. The baron of Assendelft was prominent among the latter in his endeavors to change his opinions. But Teeksen replied that those who willfully departed from or renounced the truth were guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, which could not be forgiven either here or hereafter. He also maintained boldly that men ought not to be ashamed of the word of Christ, and constantly reminded these well-meaning disputants of the declaration of the Master: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Although they

could not move him from his faith, these persistent friends would gladly have aided him in an escape from prison, and through their influence actually procured him at one time an easy opportunity to effect this. But he refused to avail himself of it, on the ground that he had been imprisoned for no misdemeanor except that he had preached the word of God, which he would not acknowledge to be such. Yet the conduct of these citizens and noblemen of Holland showed conclusively and to their lasting honor how much they disliked the persecution of heretics, though themselves attached to the Romish Church.

At last the formal trial of Teeksen took place. The principal accusation against him was based on the attacks upon the Mass which had prominently marked his teachings. He could not be convinced of error in this conduct, nor be moved to abandon such teachings. He was now remanded to prison and forbidden all intercourse with friends, as also the use of writing-materials. After another long interval he was declared guilty of heresy and condemned to be burned at the stake.

The firmness and courage of Teunis Teeksen did not desert him on the trying day of execution, which occurred toward the close of 1530. An expression of holy joy beamed from his countenance. Arrived at the stake, he deliberately removed his shoes and stockings and bestowed them upon some poor people

standing near. As the fires advanced he sang a hymn familiar to the Reformed of those days, beginning "I'm but a lambkin on the heath," the import of which was much like that of our own "I was a wandering sheep." And finally, with thanksgiving to God upon his lips and the glad hope and assurance of salvation in his heart, he breathed his last in the midst of the consuming flames.

CHAPTER IX.

JORIAAN KETEL; OR, THE ANABAPTIST MARTYRS.

IT would be eminently unfair in treating of the martyrs of Holland to omit all mention of that peculiar sect which furnished hundreds of victims to the persecuting fury of the Church of Rome in Holland. Their actions and their practices were often wildly extravagant, and even wicked; nevertheless, there were not found wanting among them those who witnessed a good confession in the hour of trial, and who endured tortures and death with a heroic faith in Christ.

We read in Brandt's *History* that a certain burgher of Deventer, in Overyssel, Joriaan Ketel, was arrested and imprisoned in the spring of the year 1544. The charge against him was that he was a follower of David Joris and had printed his *Wonderbook*. We naturally inquire who this David Joris was and what his *Wonderbook* signified.

The first martyr of the Anabaptist sect was also one of its two founders, and was, moreover, the first to experience that those of the Reformed faith could

persecute as well as suffer persecution. His name was Felix Mants. He preached the novel doctrines at Zurich, in Switzerland, in 1522, and encountered the opposition of no less a person than Zwinglius himself. The controversy was ended by the drowning of Mants according to the formula ascribed to Zwinglius: "*Qui iterum mergit, mergatur*" ("He who rebaptizes with water shall be drowned in water"[1]). In the year 1527 the doctrines of the Anabaptists were introduced into Holland, and in this same year three of these sectaries were roasted to death over a slow fire in The Hague.

Sad to say, the development of wild and wicked extravagance among these people seems to have been due to one or two individuals of Holland birth. One John Matthewson of Haarlem, and a certain John Bokelson of Leyden, added to the new teachings concerning baptism the doctrine of an earthly kingdom. This, they said, the Lord was about to establish, and meantime they proclaimed themselves the kings of Zion in his stead. As a preliminary step they made themselves masters of the city of Münster, in Germany, not far from the borders of Holland. Here they assumed royal pomp and arrogated to themselves the privilege of David and Solomon in multiplying their wives to an indefinite extent. When the bishop of Münster regained his capital, these deceivers met with a terrible fate. The sect

[1] Brandt, *His. der Reform.*, I. p. 101. Thus Brandt translates.

had been brought into great disrepute by these transactions, and the Reformed in general suffered by the scandals which these sectaries occasioned, for polygamy was not confined to the chiefs or kings only, but was practiced and defended throughout the sect; and this principle degenerated finally into the advocacy and indulgence of the most shameless orgies of free love.

Divisions, meantime, had arisen among the Anabaptists, and some disapproved of the attempts of the followers of John of Leyden to establish an earthly kingdom. After the latter had perished, and his kingdom with him, a certain Anabaptist preacher made himself prominent by his efforts to reconcile parties within the sect. This was David Joris, a native of Delft. He succeeded in getting together representatives of the different views, and laid before them a certain formula of concord, which they signed. He followed this up by publishing a little book treating of the differences that existed, and by attempting to heal them. But for the most part his endeavors only gained him the enmity of both parties. Ere this he had enjoyed the highest esteem among the Anabaptists. While yet at Delft, before he began his career as a preacher, his tongue had been pierced for certain bold words against the Mass and the priesthood. After being ordained by an Anabaptist preacher he acquired a reputation by composing and publishing several hymns or songs

of a religious nature based mainly on Bible stories. That he was held in great estimation by the Anabaptists of Münster appears from the preaching of the twenty-six apostles whom their king sent out to convert and conquer the world. They declared that four prophets had arisen since the days of Christ—two true ones, John of Leyden and David of Delft, and two false ones, the Pope of Rome and Martin Luther.

Failing in his efforts at reconciliation, and thereby losing his influence among his fellow-believers, Joris became the founder of a new sect, for whose enlightenment he wrote several books—among them, the *Wonderbook*. These works he composed in retirement at Basel, in Switzerland, where he lived in great comfort, supported by the liberal donations of his devoted followers, until his death in 1556. The doctrines which formed the basis of this new sect were the most unblushing blasphemy. Joris taught "that the doctrines of the Old and New Testaments were incomplete and unavailing to save those who accepted them, but that *his* were perfect and efficacious; that he was the true Christ and Messiah, the beloved Son of the Father, not born of the flesh, but of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Jesus Christ. To him was given the power to save or to condemn, to forgive or to retain sins, and at one time the whole world would be judged by him. All sins against the Father and Son would be forgiven, but

not the sin against the Holy Ghost—that is, against David Joris. Marriage was free, and no one confined by it to one woman." The *Wonderbook*, if once read by theologians, councilors of sovereigns, kings and princes, would cause them to exclaim, in the words of Isaiah, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." His adherents were somewhat taken aback by his death, but they cherished the conviction that he would rise from his grave within three years and then advance to the conquest of the world—not by the sword, but by the power of his teachings. His body did indeed leave the grave at the end of those years, but it was by the hands of the executioner, who was ordered to consign it to the flames.

Yet for such a man and in devotion to such doctrines was endured a martyrdom as noble and as heroic as any for the true faith, and we shall not understand thoroughly the condition and spirit of those times if we do not take this fact into consideration or if we refuse to accord the crown of martyrdom to Joriaan Ketel. As we have already stated, he had been arrested because he had printed the *Wonderbook*. His name had been given to the authorities by a member of an Anabaptist sect different from his own—one who had taken advantage of these sectarian divisions to ease his tortures while under examination by betraying heretics of another stripe. Ketel confessed that he was one of the ad-

herents of David Joris's new sect, that he had sustained intimate relations to Joris, that he had read his books, copied his manuscripts, printed them and conveyed them to several parts of the country, his only regret being that he had not done more of this work. In order to force him to divulge the whereabouts of David Joris—who was living under an assumed name at Basel—and others of his sect, he was put to the torture four or five times, until his body had become a perfect wreck. But he mentioned no names except those of such of his brethren as had gone to Embden and other places in East Friesland, in Germany. He maintained in the presence of his judges: "David Joris has taught me nothing except that which is good—namely, the word of God; all his doctrines he proved to me by the divine Scriptures, and he admonished me that I should mortify the old man with his evil lusts." It was undoubtedly true that this follower of David Joris, for one, had learned that lesson. Brandt remarks that it seemed as if Ketel had gathered all that was good out of the teachings of his master: "Some imagined that the virtue of this one disciple justified the master in all things else. This death brought David Joris many adherents." While in prison Ketel wrote to his children a letter full of godly admonitions and breathing a spirit of patience and gentleness. When his sentence had been read to him, he removed his bonnet and said reverently,

"The Lord be praised for evermore." He was sentenced to be beheaded on the 9th of August, 1544. Arrived at the place of execution, he addressed the bystanders: "My dear and worthy citizens, I pray you do not take it in evil part that I appear so cheerful." He prayed aloud to God, saying, "O God, if it were possible that I should rise after this death, and I might then die a second time for this truth of the God of heaven, thou knowest, O my God, that my heart would delight in this and do it with all gladness." Finally, he bore witness to his faith in God and in Jesus Christ, and that the ground of it was fixed upon the doctrines of the apostles and prophets. He claimed the same for the faith of David Joris, and was willing to seal that conviction with his blood. When the officer of justice presiding at his execution remarked that David Joris was the most wicked heretic upon earth, Joriaan replied, "The day of the Lord will reveal who of us twain has judged him aright." Then he kneeled down before the block and received the death-stroke.[1]

Whatever we may think of the merits or the demerits of the curious sect of the Anabaptists, there was no class of religious sectaries opposed to Rome who furnished more victims to the fire and the sword of persecution. On almost every page of the martyrology of Holland, by whomsoever written,

[1] Brandt, *Histor. der Reform.*, Vol. I. pp. 144, 145.

whether by authors of their own or by those of other sects, we read of men and women by the five, ten, dozen or score at a time put to death in one or another place by drowning, burning, hanging or burying alive. In Rotterdam a whole conventicle was betrayed, and forthwith executed by being placed in boats and so pushed under the thick ice and drowned. One and thirty here, six and thirty there, forty or more at a third place, were repeatedly sacrificed at one fell blow; for they were assailed from all sides, and were pursued by the Reformed, where they had the power, with as great good-will as by the incensed Romanists.

From these numberless martyrdoms we select one more, as illustrative of the really genuine Christian principle which at times could actuate these people.

Dirk Williamson, a burgher of Asperen, a village in South Holland, near the borders of Gelderland, having been accused of holding the Anabaptist doctrines, an officer was sent to arrest him. Knowledge of this fact reached Dirk just in time to enable him to make his escape from the house before the officer arrived. He ran with all his might, closely pursued by the latter. It was early in the winter, and there had been hardly frost enough to cover the rivers and the canals with a coating of ice such as could bear the weight of a man. Still, in his extremity the poor Anabaptist ventured to cross a

small stream that lay in his path. He safely reached the other side, although the ice bent under his hurrying footsteps. His pursuer was not so fortunate: the ice gave way, and he fell into the water. Hearing the man's cries, Williamson looked back, and perceived that his pursuer could not possibly extricate himself from his perilous position. In the spirit of the true Christian, wishing to return good for evil, the persecuted heretic came back upon the ice and at the imminent risk of his own life saved that of the constable. The latter accordingly omitted to effect the arrest wherewith he was charged, and allowed Dirk Williamson to go back unmolested to his home. But the authorities did not share their officer's gratitude. He was commanded, on pain of death for dereliction of duty, to proceed once more to the arrest. This he did, and on the 16th of May, 1570, the noble-hearted Dirk Williamson paid the penalty for his self-sacrificing and Christian generosity. He breathed his last under the most excruciating and lingering tortures at the stake.[1]

In justice to the Anabaptists, it must be said that a pure form of evangelical doctrine untainted by any notions of earthly empire to be founded by violence, unsullied by any impure teachings or practices concerning the marriage state, was promulgated with great success and spiritual power by Menno Simons, a converted Frisian priest, who died in

[1] Brandt, *His. der Reform.*, I. p. 500.

1561 ;[1] and during the Eighty Years' War the Anabaptist congregations were among the earliest to contribute of their slender means to the support of the cause of William of Orange.

[1] Hansen's *Ref. Ch. in Netherlands*, pp. 42–50.

CHAPTER X.

ANGELUS MERULA, THE BENEVOLENT PRIEST.

ON the 26th of July, 1886, we took the steamer from Rotterdam to Brille. We had selected this date for such a trip with a purpose, as will appear immediately. A sail along the broad Maas and among the islands formed by its several branches brought us in a little less than two hours to the above-mentioned city. It was an historic shrine to us for more than one reason. Here, on April 1, 1572, the first stronghold of liberty was wrenched from the hands of Spain by the invincible "Water-Beggars," and as the modern fortifications completely surrounding the place with high walls became patent to our attentive gaze we imagined that we saw Brille nearly as it must have looked on that fortunate "April Fool's day" when "Alva's spectacles were taken away."[1] After looking up some memorials

[1] Motley mentions the rhymes:

"Op den eersten April
Verloor Alva zyn Bril;"

which he translates correctly enough:

"On April's Fool's day
Duke Alva's spectacles were taken away."

of this event we bent our footsteps to pursue the other errand which had led us to select just this day for the visit.

We inquired after the orphan asylum; we were directed to two. One is located in the principal street leading past the city-hall; it is called the *Geuzen Gesticht*, or "Beggars' Institute," and was erected or founded in 1872 to commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of the taking of the city by the patriot navy. The other asylum, we were told, was near the "great," or St. Catharine, church. The first prominent object that had engaged our attention as we entered the river Maas with the steamer from America had been this very church; its high roof and broad tower had loomed up on the view far above the city and the surrounding country. As now we stood beside it we noticed that it had never been completed; the nave had been carried only as far as the transept, and half the capitals of the two final columns projected beyond the rear wall. The church and the tower were built of brick and looked a little the worse for wear. The tower was perfectly square from top to bottom and singularly broad; it seemed to us it must have measured from forty to fifty feet in each direction. At a distance of some hundred feet obliquely to the left of this tower we perceived a

The play is upon the name of the city, which resembles the Dutch word for spectacles.

peculiar building. A small front yard, or garden, adorned with flower-beds and sods, was shut off from the street by a fine, tall iron fence, undoubtedly modern. The front of the house also looked modern and was stuccoed in imitation of stone, but its quaint tiled roof betrayed its more ancient character and gave the lie to its modern countenance. We suspected that this was the object of our search. We tried the iron fence, but found its gates closed against us, and the ringing of the bell produced no reply. But our efforts brought a dozen heads out of the doors of as many lowly cottages which stretched in a continuous row to the left along a narrow, unpaved path to the fortifications beyond. Inquiring whether this was the orphan asylum, we received an affirmative answer, and asking, thereupon, why no one was at home, we received the information that to-day was *Merle-feest* ("the Merula celebration"), and that all the inmates had gone early that morning on an excursion to Rotterdam.

Merle-feest—the Merula celebration! Did these honest Dutch housewives know what they were saying? Did they reflect that the witness of three hundred years to the truth of history was in their words? We stood and looked upon those walls and repeated their simple words again and again to ourselves, and a 26th of July of years and years ago, with all its attendant circumstances of sadness and misery, came to our minds with a vividness as if we had ourselves

lived at that earlier date and had looked upon the scene of woe with our own eyes. On the 26th of July, 1557, the founder of this asylum, Angelus Merula, or Engel Merle, had died the death of a martyr; and even as in the days of the primitive Church the dates of the martyrdom of believers were kept as holy days, as if they were the birth-days of their glory and happiness, so this day had been kept ever since 1557 by the inmates of this institution, and now, on July 26, 1886, we were informed it was the Merula feast and the orphans were away celebrating it—celebrating it in modern fashion, too; indeed, in the American fashion of a steamboat excursion—a picnic to Rotterdam—but, nevertheless, even in this modern way honoring the past and linking the present reverently and lovingly to it.

We will not apologize for this long digression; we do not wish to think of these martyrs of Holland as so very far removed from us in time or in space. We shall profit the more by a perusal of their heroic firmness and deathless loyalty to the faith we also hold dear if we can feel that they are near us—that they are brethren with us of the household of faith. And when, in any of the ways which we have indicated throughout these chapters—by standing on the very ground which they trod, by looking upon the very dungeon walls which witnessed their agony and their courage, or by some such realistic connection

with events in their history as we have just noted—we find even the serious element of time removed, as it were, the barrier of ages leveled between us,—it is so much easier to realize what they suffered and how they endured that they might leave to us the heritage of a pure gospel and the liberty to worship God in accordance with its principles.

The story of Angelus Merula is one of special interest, significance and instructiveness; there is none that illustrates more forcibly the fierce hatred wherewith the Church of Rome looked upon even the purest and holiest endeavors, consistent with entire and devoted loyalty to herself, to let in the light of truth upon some of her most obvious departures from scriptural doctrine.

Angelus Merula (Latinized from the Dutch, Engel Merle) was born in the city of Brille in 1482, thus a year before the birth of Luther. He was of respectable family, nearly allied to the nobility and possessed of great wealth. He was sent to complete his studies at the University of Paris, where he spent four years, attaining the degrees of master of arts and bachelor or licentiate of theology. In the year 1511 he returned to his native country, and was ordained to the priesthood in the "dom," or cathedral church, of Utrecht. At that time he was already noted for his "excellent piety and learning, joined to great zeal,"[1] and the lord (baron) of Kruningen

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 490.

and Heenvliet invited him to become pastor of the church of the village of Heenvliet. This village is situated but a few miles to the east of his native city of Brille, and on the same island—that of East Voorne, now Voorne-Putten. He labored in this humble field for more than forty years, diligently instructing his people in the truth of God as it seemed proper for him to teach it, giving himself to an impartial, prayerful and simple study of the word of God itself. And, being so near his native town, he at the same time gave much attention to a wise bestowal of his abundant wealth; he founded, built and liberally endowed the orphan asylum, which is still in existence, and erected several comfortable dwelling-houses for the better and more healthful accommodation of the poor of the city.

It does not appear that this worthy and benevolent priest at any time had read or distinctly avowed acceptance of the writings of Luther; indeed, he commenced to pursue a course of evangelical teaching almost immediately after his settlement at Heenvliet, in 1512, and thus long before the work of Luther had begun. He discovered the errors of Rome in the same manner as did the great Reformer —by the simple study of the Bible. It does not seem to have entered his thoughts at any time, as it did not at first occur to Luther, that in order to combat those errors and restore the pure doctrines of the gospel he needed to sever himself from the Church

or to act in opposition to her. He went about his ordinary duties as priest and pastor, and in pursuance of these introduced what seemed to him necessary corrections in the inculcation of divine truths. For instance, the formula of the Mass for All Saints' day contained the prayer, "Almighty, eternal God, thou who hast permitted us to *celebrate the merits of all the saints* upon one holy day, we beseech thee to abundantly vouchsafe to us the expected fullness of thine atonement *through the multitude of these mediators.*" Merula changed the expressions in italics so as to read "celebrate the GLORY of all the saints" and "through the intercession of thine ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON ALONE, who is the praise and glory of all the saints."[1] In his sermons, too, he took occasion, on strictly scriptural grounds, to point out where the Romish Church had fallen into fatal errors, and he followed up these public teachings by private conversations in the confessional or in familiar intercourse with his parishioners. He found a warm supporter of his views in the person of the baron of Kruningen and Heenvliet himself, whom he even induced to authorize a few reforms in the church of Heenvliet. Thus, offerings to the images of saints were forbidden and certain superstitious processions were no longer held.[2]

[1] Brandt, *Hist. der Reform.*, I. p. 199; *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 491.

[2] Brandt, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

For many years this excellent but unobtrusive work went on. It was impossible that Merula's teachings should not have come to the knowledge of the Church authorities or to that of the inquisitors. But as long as the lord of Heenvliet, who had called him to this charge, and who fully endorsed his actions, lived to protect his person and second his endeavors to purify the Church, the enemies of truth could not molest him. No sooner, however, had his noble patron departed this life than the persecution of the faithful priest began. The son and successor of the old baron was equally disposed to uphold Merula, but he had not the firmness of his father. He had married the sister of the stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland, and through this chief dignitary of the State the prelates and the inquisitors brought strong influence to bear upon the young nobleman. At last he was induced to deliver up his aged friend and to permit him to be tried for his opinions. An account of what Merula had taught and the changes he had introduced at Heenvliet was sent to the regent Mary of Hungary, sister of Charles V., who had succeeded Margaret of Austria in the government of the provinces after the latter's death, in 1530. She at once ordered the Provincial Estates of Holland to take charge of the matter. Thereupon, Christian de Weert, a member of the Estates and procurator-general of the province, was despatched to Heenvliet to investigate the truth

of the accusations brought against the venerable priest. The alterations in the formula of the Mass were, of course, at once detected. The procurator then repaired to the village of Geervliet, hardly a mile distant, and secretly summoned the oldest of the inhabitants and of the congregation of Heenvliet, whom he interrogated as to the teachings and doings of their pastor through the long term of his ministrations among them. Having taken down their statements in writing, he returned to The Hague without having even seen Merula himself, and reported the result of his investigations to the Estates.

For some months nothing further was done, but, in the spring of 1553, Franciscus Sonnius, doctor of theology, canon of the cathedral at Utrecht and inquisitor, was informed of the case. Dr. Sonnius became unpleasantly celebrated afterward as the envoy of King Philip to the Pope to ask his permission to increase the number of bishoprics within the boundaries of the Netherland provinces. He arrived at Heenvliet during Lent, and at once ordered a search of Merula's books and papers, while he secured his person and put him under guard at the castle of Wilenstein, situated in the vicinity of the village and belonging to the baron of Heenvliet. This occurred on April 20, 1553, and was but the beginning of evils.

CHAPTER XI.

ANGELUS MERULA: HIS FIRST SENTENCE.

WE have before remarked that the worst pains of martyrdom were by no means always those endured in the last extremity at the stake, but were often suffered during a prolonged imprisonment and the harrowing examinations by the judges of the Inquisition. An illustration of this fact is afforded in a striking manner by the case of Angelus Merula, who was providentially spared the torments of the fire, but whose martyrdom extended through four long years of the most painful experiences. At the age of seventy-one years he found himself a prisoner at the castle of his patron, while hostile hands and eyes were rummaging among his papers, hunting for evidence that might destroy him. Sonnius confronted him with seventeen separate charges based upon his teachings and his alterations of formulæ or ceremonies, and demanded a reply in writing. Within three days Merula furnished this, in clear and convincing language defending himself on scriptural grounds. The inquisitor now demanded his sermons, or briefs of sermons, for examina-

tion. Friends advised Merula to refuse, but he would not listen to such advice. "If," he said, "I should conceal what I have taught my people, the report would be spread abroad that I have deceived them. What I was not ashamed to preach I will not be ashamed to make known to my examiners."

Sonnius, on receiving these briefs into his hands —having, also, after another thorough search, collected all the suspicious books he found in Merula's study—associated with him the pastor of a neighboring village in the examination of the whole. They gathered abundant evidences of evangelical teachings from the sermons. They found a copy of the *Interim*, a compact which Charles V. had ordered to be drawn up and published in the hope of reconciling the Reformed and Roman Catholic princes of Germany. Upon the pages of this book Merula had written numerous marginal notes and observations which dealt freely and unsparingly with the erroneous teachings of the mother-Church. Altogether, the inquisitor had a clear case of heresy against the aged priest. He expanded the points of offence into one hundred and fifty articles, to which Merula was again commanded to reply in writing. When this had been done, Sonnius attempted to get the consent of the baron of Heenvliet to his removal for trial to Utrecht, the seat of the bishop, whose sway extended over all Holland at that time. The

baron would not allow this, but consented that he be taken to The Hague and held a prisoner there. He had scarcely been conveyed to this place, however, when Sonnius, seconded by the chief inquisitor of the Netherlands, Ruard Tapper, again sought to effect his transfer to Utrecht. Baron Heenvliet now yielded, but Merula appealed to the States of Holland, and they refused to permit this infraction of the privileges of citizenship.

On the 8th of June, 1553, after six weeks of imprisonment in the dungeons of Castle Wilenstein, the aged and infirm pastor was removed to The Hague and confined in the Prison-Gate, where John Pistorius had languished before him. He was not treated with great severity at first; he was allowed the companionship of his nephew, William Merula, who ministered to him in his feebleness and his frequent illnesses. Meanwhile, Sonnius, disappointed in his desire to get Merula's case more directly under the control of the Church at Utrecht, purposely delayed the trial. Months went by in spite of urgent solicitations on the part of the prisoner to bring his case to an issue. As winter approached, Regent Mary, in consideration of the prisoner's advanced age, ordered him to be taken to a place of security not quite so uncomfortable as the common prison. Accordingly on December 24, he was transferred to a convent and put in charge of two officers of the law.

The "Gevangenpoort" or "Prison Gate" at The Hague. Page 230.

It was not till the 9th of July, 1554, that Tapper and Sonnius appeared at The Hague to proceed with the trial. Tapper at once ordered the aged sufferer to be returned to the Prison-Gate, strictly guarded and deprived of the ministrations of his nephew, forbidding all intercourse with the latter, or with any one else, by word of mouth or by letters. When the trial opened, the one hundred and fifty articles which Sonnius had submitted the year before, with Merula's written replies, were produced in court. But the chief inquisitor grew impatient, ordered them to be reduced to one hundred expressed in briefest form, and commanded Merula to reply to them categorically on the spot, saying to each "I believe" or "I believe not," and nothing more. This was done, the examination lasting only about one hour.

The proceedings thus far constituted merely the formal accusation. Merula was informed that by order of the regent two gentlemen of the court of Holland had been appointed to assist him with their counsel, and to prevent the occurrence during the process of anything that might be irregular or illegal or that was prompted by the bitterness of prejudice.

The trial, now regularly begun, lasted through almost an entire month. Brandt says: "He maintained his cause against Tapper and his assistants, in the presence of the stadtholder and the court,

during nearly a month, verbally and by writing, with an invincible eloquence and a marvelous firmness such as astonished his bitterest enemies and rendered them as mute as fishes." Merula requested that some of his written replies might be read in the hearing of the court; the inquisitors would not permit this. When he appealed to the court, they promised to let his counsel see copies of them—a promise, however, which was not fulfilled. Indeed, the counsel themselves were of no real help to him and seemed appointed only for the sake of form; for when he called their attention to the fact that the inquisitors refused him the commonest rights and courtesies usually accorded to prisoners on trial for life, they replied, "We are simply appointed by the queen[1] to be witnesses of what is and has been done, and not to be judges."

In the course of his defence Merula maintained that he had never separated himself from the Church, and had never before, nor did he now, wish to do so. He declared that he could never depart from these positions: "that God alone must be called upon in the hour of need, that Christ is the only Mediator and Intercessor, that the adoration of images is vain, unprofitable and improper, that justification is only by faith, not by works, that the merit of Christ's life and death is the only atonement."[2] In regard to the marginal notes in

[1] Regent Mary was queen of Hungary. [2] Brandt, I. p. 203.

the *Interim,* he explained that with other theologians he had been summoned to Utrecht to examine and report upon the articles contained in this compact. Being prevented by sickness and infirmity from attending that gathering, he had made these notes for his own private use. It was gross injustice to charge him with dissension and heresy on the ground of such work, undertaken at the instance of the authorities of the Church themselves.

On the 28th of September, 1554, everything had been made ready for the execution of Merula, but, to their dismay, the inquisitors discovered that they were in quite as much danger of their lives as their innocent victim. From all parts of Holland the people had poured into The Hague, clamoring for their "father, defender, only comforter and helper in their need and adversity." His excellent virtues and large beneficence to the poor were remembered: the indignation and the sympathy of the masses were aroused, and they were prepared to execute vengeance upon his persecutors. The States of Holland, too, shared the popular sentiment. The inquisitors were in great perplexity, but they were equal to the occasion. They resorted to an extraordinary expedient marked by a cunning worthy of the devil whose work they were doing. They sent for the prisoner. He supposed he was to be led to the stake, and rejoiced that the end of his misery

was near. His nephew had been permitted to take leave of him; in parting he pressed a tender farewell kiss upon the youth's brow, not expecting to see him again. He was conducted to the council-chamber. Arrived there, one of the inquisitors, suffragan bishop of Utrecht, threw himself upon his knees before the astonished Merula and with folded and upraised hands addressed him in a lengthy prayer. He told him that the people were greatly incensed on his account and threatened death to all such as should do him harm. "Preserve our lives," he exclaimed, with much dramatic affectation, "for they are in your hands. Let us set aside the weighty articles of faith; you need not retract your opinions about these, but may continue to hold them in their full force. But in the matter of some unimportant customs or ceremonies of long standing confess that you have been somewhat unwise and untimely in your zeal to abolish them, and say, 'I am sorry for this.' Do this in the hearing of the people, and you shall live and preserve our lives at the same time."[1]

The old man was much moved by this strange appeal. Turning to the president of the court, he asked him what he should do. The latter replied, "Ask your conscience, and none other." The prisoner, not quite catching his meaning, accepted the reply as a hint to comply. He accordingly gave

[1] Brandt, p. 206.

his consent to the proposed measure, thinking thereby to appease the multitude and to promote peace at no sacrifice of any important doctrine or principle. The inquisitors thereupon proceeded with their prisoner to the public square, where the preparations for burning him had been made. Here the people were assembled in great numbers, ready to attempt his rescue. Their attention was requested to the reading of a paper. The principal, distinguishing teachings of evangelical truth—those which he would not have retracted to save his life, which it had been expressly stipulated would be left out of consideration in this arrangement—were read, after which it was stated that Merula abjured all such doctrines and all sympathy with Luther or other heretics, that he promised on oath to remain in the faith and unity of the true Romish Church, holding that all those who did differently were worthy of eternal damnation, that he prayed God to forgive him the errors which he now renounced, and that he also asked to be forgiven by those whom he had misled.

Merula, now seventy-two years old, was very deaf. The reading had been done in as low a voice as possible, with great rapidity and indistinctness of enunciation, and while it was going on some of the inquisitors had purposely engaged the prisoner in conversation ; therefore he had not heard a word of the contents of the paper read to the people. When the reader had finished, the suffragan bishop turned

to Merula and asked in a loud voice whether he consented to what had been read. Thinking, of course, that the unimportant matters of which mention had been made before had been treated of in the paper, Merula innocently answered in the affirmative. The effect upon the people may be imagined. Their sympathy was turned into disgust and scorn, and the inquisitors might now safely proceed to execute what sentence they pleased. Nevertheless, they did not put him to death. His books and his writings were ordered to be burned, he himself was condemned to perpetual imprisonment and to pay all the costs of his trial, while the recantation, as read before the people and consented to by him, was to be published from the pulpit of Heenvliet.

After this sentence had been read to him Merula was led back to his cell. Here his nephew awaited him, and now for the first time he learned of the fraud that had been practiced upon him. He was thrown into a paroxysm of grief and indignation. "O my God!" he exclaimed; "how deceitfully have these gowned hypocrites, these robbers of my fair fame, dealt with me! Why should one who is on the brink of the grave, and in the very course of nature near unto death, have given the appearance of a fear of death, doing despite unto thy truth by disgracefully abjuring it? This be far from me, most gracious Father; such has never entered my thoughts, has never come up within my heart; such

compromises have I never made with the enemies of thy truth. O God, they have sorely deceived me and led astray thy people." It was impossible to console the afflicted old man; despair and misery filled his heart and affected him so deeply that he fell into a severe and dangerous illness. This being reported to the States of Holland by his nephew and confirmed by physicians, they permitted his removal from the rigorous prison in The Hague to the monastery of St. Magdalene in the city of Delft. The favorable change and the faithful and indefatigable ministrations of William Merula preserved his life, but it was saved only for greater and more cruel sufferings and persecution.

CHAPTER XII.

ANGELUS MERULA: HIS DEATH.

WE trust it will not be thought superfluous to devote three chapters to this one martyrdom. It is unparalleled in the length of time through which it extended; every day and week and month of the more than four years was but the prolongation of multiplied miseries and sufferings. Besides, the details and circumstances that come into view before us give us an instructive insight into the modes, practices and expedients which the Inquisition pursued without scruple to destroy its victims; and the bitterness of their hatred is especially significant when we reflect that it was directed against a man who desired nothing so much as the good of the Romish Church, and who felt to the last that he was none other than her loyal son.

Merula had scarcely recovered from his sickness when his troubles began again to thicken. Tapper, the chief inquisitor for the Netherlands, was also chancellor of the university at Louvain. He claimed that he could not travel so frequently to Holland to conduct this case, and requested permission of the

regent Mary to remove Merula from Delft to Louvain. Appeals to the States of Holland and to the regent, protests against the injustice and illegality of such a proceeding, proved all in vain. The regent gave the orders for his removal, the States of Holland gave their consent, and, in the beginning of the year 1555, Merula was taken to Louvain, in the Southern Netherlands—now Belgium—and imprisoned in a monastery. Here he was forbidden all intercourse, personal or by letter, with his friends; he was not allowed to eat at the same table with the monks, and on three days of the week was to subsist on bread and water only. These severities, however, did not break his spirit; he remained firm in his faith and in his opposition to Romish errors and superstitions. A renewed attempt was therefore determined on to move him from his position. He was subjected to another hearing early in 1556, or about a year after he had been brought to Louvain. The empty disputations, the vexatious assaults of learning and sophistry, proved of no avail, however, except that they contributed to confirm Merula in his convictions of the truth. When arguments were seen to fail and he was threatened with still greater punishments and a painful death, he replied, "I do not fear my adversaries, and for that truth which I have preached and defended in my writings I shall go into the flames as willingly as into the dining-hall to eat my food."

The monks of the monastery, the people of the city—even some of the professors of the university—were moved to compassion by the rigorous treatment inflicted upon so aged and so worthy a man. Nothing, however, could melt the heart of the chief inquisitor. Persons who sought to induce him to moderate his severity were peremptorily and effectually silenced by the threat that he would consider those who preferred petitions in Merula's favor as among the adherents of his doctrine. But, as it was too evident that the case was making a great stir in Louvain, Tapper contemplated another transfer of the prisoner.

While the suffering old man was languishing in his dungeon great changes had taken place in the political world that surrounded him. On October 25, 1555, Charles V., emperor of Germany, king of Spain and hereditary lord of all the Netherland provinces, had abdicated these various powers and dignities in the presence of a great assembly at Brussels. His son, Philip II., succeeded to the kingdom of Spain and the sovereignty of the Low Countries; to him, therefore, Tapper now made application for permission to remove Merula to a still greater distance from his native Holland. This request was granted, and, accordingly, about the middle of the year 1556, the poor victim of the Inquisition, bowed under the weight of years and of his many sorrows, was compelled once more to

suffer a change of prison, being placed in confinement in the abbey of Lissieux, in the province of Hainault, far to the south of Brussels.

Here Merula remained more than a year, during which time he was constantly annoyed by the futile efforts of the abbot and others to reason him back to a full acceptance of Romish errors and traditions. Early in 1557 he petitioned the king to allow him the freedom of the abbey, from which it appears that here he must have been confined in a cell. But the answer of Philip hastened the culmination of his calamities; he commanded that the prisoner be removed from the abbey to the city of Mons, in the same province, and that there the final steps in the process be instituted, and thus an end be made of the case. Accordingly, Merula was conveyed to this city on the 4th of June, 1557, and thrown into a wretched dungeon, foul with vermin, in the castle or citadel. And again in the present instance fraud attended and aggravated the victim's fate. The transfer was secretly and quickly effected, and the report was industriously spread through the city that the prisoner had been arrested somewhere in the vicinity. Still further to aid the delusion that this was a new case, officials were sent down to Mons, and these went through the forms of a trial. Merula was declared to be a lapsed heretic; he was condemned to be degraded from the priesthood, and afterward to be burned to death at the stake. The sentence

appointed the 24th of July, 1557, as the day of execution.

The faithful and affectionate nephew, William Merula, had been separated from his uncle ever since his removal to Louvain, and while there, as well as subsequently, the martyr had been forbidden to communicate with his friends. By the secret removal from the abbey of Lissieux, William had lost all traces of his unfortunate relative, but with indefatigable diligence he put forth every effort to discover his whereabouts; he was rewarded at last, and learned that the aged victim had been taken to Mons. William hastened, therefore, to Brussels to ask permission of Tapper to join his uncle, and arrived there on the identical 24th of July. Tapper gave the desired permission, but informed him that Angelus had been sentenced to die on this very day. Nevertheless, William persevered in his journey, and reached Mons on the morning of July 26. No one, however, could tell him anything about his uncle, for his name had not even been mentioned there. About ten o'clock in the forenoon a procession was seen to issue from the gates of the citadel. Young Merula, naturally on the alert to profit by anything that would give him access to the awful secrets of the citadel, joined the curious crowds that ran to ascertain what this might signify. In the midst of a number of soldiers and ecclesiastics he perceived the tottering steps of an aged man

leaning heavily upon a staff. Emaciated by the cruel imprisonment of the last six weeks, covered with vile rags and disgusting vermin, the devoted nephew with difficulty recognized in this wretched being the venerable relative whom so long he had sought in vain. Some delay had occurred on the 24th which had compelled the postponement of the execution for two days. It was a most fortunate providence; had it occurred on the day that had been appointed for it, the world might never have known what was the glorious end of this shameful persecution.

Just before leaving the castle for the place of execution Merula had addressed his judges in a scathing rebuke, ending with the words, "The glowing embers, when they shall have consumed my body, will not grow cold before the rumor of your murder shall have flown over into Holland to my people." A great joy took possession of him when he saw his nephew. He said to him, "My son, the last hour, for which I have long wished with all my heart, has now come. This is the hour in which the great God gives me an opportunity to seal with my blood and a painful death the truth of all things I have maintained both publicly and privately. Look upon my foul condition; if your eyes cannot bear the sight, the stench will overpower you. Thieves and murderers are not entreated so cruelly. Go and publish to friends and acquaint-

ances what you have seen and heard. All that I have will be your portion. Do as much as you can to promote the preservation of the houses which I have built for the poor people of Brille. I trust that the poor and the orphans may keep the dwellings and the endowments which I have devoted to their benefit. The minister of finance will be more merciful than the inquisitors."

But now the officers impatiently interrupted the aged speaker, and bade him finish what he wished to say to his relative. He concluded, therefore, as follows: "Behold, I go. I thank God, the most gracious Father, that I shall die publicly. My blood, however, will not quench the fire which has arisen against my enemies; the flames thereof shall soon burst forth with violence, and will refuse to be extinguished either by them or by those who come after them." His nephew now encouraged him with words of cheer and hopefulness: "Believe assuredly that in a few moments you will behold the salvation of the Lord in the land of the living. Quit you, therefore, right manfully, and await the coming of the Lord with firmness." The two men were now torn from each other's embrace, and the procession at once went on toward its destination.

The executioner on one side and a Franciscan monk on the other supported the exhausted frame of the martyr, who was now seventy-five years of

age. But his last breath was expended in proclaiming the truth. All along the way he ceased not to address the accompanying multitudes in the French language, greatly to the surprise of his persecutors, who did not know he was master of that tongue, and thus had not expected that he would harangue the people. He admonished all to seek "the true knowledge, love and fear of God," also "to meditate on the death and merits of the only Saviour, Jesus Christ, renouncing their own works." He declared that the principal reason why he must die was that he had persisted in teaching that "on the name of God alone should men call."

A spot outside the city walls had been selected for the place of execution. In this part of the country it seems to have been customary on these occasions to put up a small structure—called the "house"—composed of wood, straw and other highly-inflammable materials. Into this the victim was conducted and secured to a stake placed in the centre, after which the torch was applied to the house. Arrived in front of this fatal house, Merula asked leave to spend a few moments in prayer, and his request was granted. He sank down upon his knees, and for some minutes his lips were seen to move. At length his kneeling form was observed to incline to one side and to lean heavily against the hut of straw. The bystanders supposed that the dread of the approaching torture had overcome the aged man and

had caused him to fall into a swoon, but it was soon found that life had fled—that the suffering soul had left the body. The executioner, startled by this signal interference of Providence, refused to wreak the vengeance of the Inquisition upon the insensate body. Some officers of that court, however, untroubled by any such tenderness of heart, put the torch to the inflammable house and threw the corpse upon the flames.

Thus perished with the crown and honor of martyrdom upon him the pious and learned Angelus Merula, a priest of Rome, a loyal son of the Church. But he had dared to read his Bible aright in the original tongues, to which he had access, and because the conclusions derived from an impartial Bible study had seemed to him to upset and overthrow the traditions and the superstitions of that erring Church, she hounded this loyal son and faithful servant to the death, pursuing him with unrelenting cruelty and persistent hatred through four long years of persecution, and to the very flames of the martyr's stake at last.

What reforms could be hoped for within the bosom of such a Church? The hope of a reformation lay only outside of it, in spite of it, in opposition to it. This Luther found; thus all the Reformers were cast out of her communion, and the march of spiritual power and spiritual growth went on beyond her pale and left her far behind to mum-

ble over and over again the old musty traditions, and to go on smothering the spirit and power of religion in senseless ceremonies and burdensome ordinances.[1]

[1] Very full and circumstantial accounts of this martyr are found both in Brandt's *Historie* and in the *Groot Martelaarsboek*.

CHAPTER XIII.

HERMAN JANSEN OF AMSTERDAM.

MORE than once we have had occasion to speak of the edicts or placards promulgated against the Reformed by the emperor Charles V. The date of the martyrdom last noticed, as well as that which is our subject at present, is beyond the date of the latest of these prohibitory laws, and a brief summary of them will, therefore, be now in place.

Those were still the early days of printing, as the invention was scarcely a century old; there were, therefore, as yet no newspapers, nor was there a journal which figured as the official organ of the court or government. When, accordingly, edicts of such importance to every inhabitant of the land as were those against hereties were issued by the royal hand, there was only one way to secure the popular attention and perusal: they were printed upon immense sheets and pasted upon bulletin-boards at the town-halls or in the vicinity of the town-gates, where men might read them as they came in from the surrounding country. Hence they received the name of "placards."

The first of these despotic documents was published in the year 1521, shortly after Luther's arraignment before the Diet, or Parliament, of the empire at Worms. In this the Reformer is described as follows: "It seems that the person of the aforesaid Martin is not that of a man, but of a devil in human form, covered with the habit of a monk, in order to bring the human race the better and more easily to everlasting death and damnation."[1] This placard was mainly directed against the reading of Luther's writings. The next edict appeared in 1525, and placed not only heretic books, but even the Scriptures, under the ban, forbidding assemblies of the people to read or discuss these. The placard of 1526 exhibited an additional restriction in the way of forbidding discussions of religious matters in the homes of the people or in private conversation anywhere. Two placards appeared in 1529 (October 14 and December 7), dealing mainly with the difficult problem of heretical literature. The former of these two appealed to the cupidity of informers by offering to give them half the confiscated property of convicted parties. It was deemed so hard to suppress the prolific literature of the Reformation that the second of the above edicts was ordered to be freshly issued every six months. In 1540 a placard was promulgated at Ghent, whither the emperor had gone to quell a tumult growing out

[1] Brandt, *Historie*, I. p. 68.

of his oppressive and unconstitutional measures: suspected heretics were by its provisions declared incapable of transferring or bequeathing their estates. The placards of 1544 and 1546 again attacked the products of the evermore industrious press and placed serious obstacles in the way of publication. That of 1549 first began to assail the privileges and the liberties pleaded in defence of their persecuted citizens by certain towns and provinces, and this, therefore, only led logically to the issuing of the tenth and last of Charles's placards—that of the year 1550.[1] This capped the climax of all the other wrongs and gave the Netherlands practically the Spanish Inquisition, although that name was diligently disavowed. According to it, "all judicial officers, at the requisition of the inquisitors, were to render them all assistance, . . . *notwithstanding any privileges or charters to the contrary.* In short, the inquisitors were not subject to the civil authority, but the civil authority to them."[2] This placard was considered to be such a consummate and effective weapon against the hated heresy that it was never improved upon. When Philip assumed the government after his father's abdication, in October, 1555, it was re-enacted less than a month later under the new reign; and subsequently Philip tried to ward

[1] See, for a convenient summary of these placards, Rev. J. W. Mears's *Beggars of Holland and Grandees of Spain.*

[2] Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, I. p. 331.

off the odium of these edicts by pretending that he had only maintained what he had found already established in the land by the emperor. Hence he was careful to issue no new placards, simply repeating at stated intervals that of 1550.

Philip had been more than three years upon his throne; he had just humbled France and concluded a most favorable treaty with her, and he was fast completing his measures for a much-desired departure from the turbulent scenes of the Low Countries to the quiet of the Spanish capital, when Herman Jansen, a native and citizen of Amsterdam, was put to death in the city of Antwerp. The margrave, or marquis, of Antwerp at this time was John of Immerseele. This dignity or office seems to have been elective or bestowed as a gift by the municipality, for William of Orange occupied this position not long after. The present incumbent was a zealous persecutor of heretics, and used the powers conferred upon him by his office to afflict them to the utmost of his ability. It was at the instance of this "blood-thirsty man," as the author of the *Great Martyrology* calls him, that Herman Jansen was arrested. The latter was a gunsmith by trade, and had, no doubt, come to Antwerp for business purposes. His being arrested, held a prisoner and tried in this city while a citizen of Amsterdam was in utter violation of burgher privileges, but it was authorized by the placards of 1549 and 1550.

The principal accusations brought against Jansen were two in number. The first was that he had permitted assemblies at his house for the preaching of the word; to this he replied that he had permitted no gatherings that were forbidden by God, but, on the contrary, such as were distinctly enjoined in Holy Writ. The second accusation gives us an interesting insight into the practices of the Reformed in those troublous times. We may well imagine that after their conversion a thorough conviction of the unscriptural character of the clergy must have made them hesitate to employ their services. The baptism of children, or other religious rites, may soon have been entrusted to chosen men among themselves. But there was a ceremony partaking of both a civil and a religious nature. It would seem that they could not easily have avoided the employment of a priest in performing marriages, yet we learn from this martyrdom that the Reformed squarely faced this issue also and entered upon the married state according to ceremonies satisfactory to themselves, disregarding the papal Church, for the second accusation against Jansen was based upon his having married his wife "in the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,"[1] as the *Martyrology* expresses it. It seems, however, that special stress was laid by the margrave upon the charge of holding secret assemblies, for this offence was more di-

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 614.

rectly treated of in the placards. Shortly after his imprisonment Jansen was permitted to address a letter to some of his friends in Amsterdam to explain to them the reason why he had been apprehended, and he took occasion by means of this writing to define his faith and support it by Scripture, denying that he was guilty of heresy, because he held no doctrines that could be called false by the standard of the Bible. His stay in prison was somewhat alleviated by companionship, one Cornelius Halewyn, a native and citizen of Antwerp, sharing his confinement.

Notwithstanding the fact that one of the earlier placards had enjoined swift proceedings against heretics, cases were frequently allowed to linger; Jansen and Halewyn were left to languish in their cheerless and uncomfortable prison for nearly a year. At length, on February 28, 1559, they were summoned to appear before the inquisitorial court. After a hearing had been given them a private consultation was held by the judges; they decided upon the sentence, but did not give public utterance to it, and this for a very significant reason. The sentence "was not publicly pronounced that the populace might not know of it."[1] Had not that populace, then, been sufficiently cowed already by the placards of the emperor and the numerous and cruel persecutions which proved their practical efficacy?

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 616.

It would seem not. At the execution of two Walloon martyrs on January 19 of this same year a riot very nearly took place. "The whole multitude," Brandt graphically records, "as with one mouth cried, 'Kill! kill!' People trampled upon each other; dwellings and stores were closed; the executioner fled; the margrave did not know where to turn; the sheriff took refuge in the church. Quiet, however, was restored, and the sentence was executed." [1]

With this popular demonstration of only six weeks ago in their minds, the inquisitors resolved to be cautious in the present instance. The nature of their sentence was kept a secret even from the prisoners themselves. They received the first intimation of it by the treatment to which they were subjected on their return to the jail. Having inquired of the constables what had been determined by the judges, they received for answer that their case had been postponed for a fortnight. But the officials by their actions gave the lie to their words. Instead of being led back to their cell, the prisoners were heavily ironed and cast into a subterranean dungeon. They knew too well that this signified that they were under sentence of death, yet this conviction did not fill them with dismay, but rather with joy.

Early in the morning of the very next day (March

[1] Brandt, *Historie*, I. p. 228.

1, 1559) the margrave of Antwerp came to the prison with a number of monks and ordered Jansen and Halewyn to be brought before him. It does not appear that he had any favors to offer to the former —possibly because he was a Hollander—but to Halewyn, as a burgher of Antwerp, he made the promise that if he would consent to hearken to the monks he would procure him a less painful mode of execution. But the offer was rejected. As they were about to be led to the place of execution Jansen made bold to address the margrave with this solemn admonition: "See to it what you are doing, for God will not account it a little thing that you deprive us of life. Therefore repent, my lord margrave, before the Lord visit you. You will not be permitted to pursue this course much longer; God will become weary of it at last."

When the prisoners had been bound, the margrave desired that they hold a wooden crucifix in their hands on their way to the scaffold. He assured Halewyn that if he would please him in this little matter he would have him beheaded instead of burned at the stake. Both martyrs, however, threw the crucifixes from them with disdain; they declared that they would not by the very least token give occasion to the reproach of having abandoned their convictions. Dying in the Lord, as witnesses to his truth, it was of small consequence what was the manner of their death, and the pain of being

burned was not to be compared with the glory that should be revealed to the faithful. They were now conducted to the market-place, one side of which is occupied by the noble city-hall, while on the opposite side the magnificent and marvelous spire of the cathedral, only a block or two away, looms far up above the intervening houses. On the way to execution Herman Jansen sang several verses of the one hundred and thirtieth psalm: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O God." Cornelius Halewyn at the same time addressed the attending throngs and admonished them with great earnestness. Arrived at the market, the sword wherewith they were to have been executed if they had yielded to the margrave was laid conspicuously near them, as if to move them from their firmness in the last moment, but it was in vain. The martyrs were then placed in a little hut made of dry branches, and were strangled at the stake.

At this moment an ominous tumult was heard arising among the assembled multitudes. It was thought that there might be a repetition of the scenes witnessed on the preceding 19th of January. The executioner, naturally supposing that he would be the first object of attack, seized the sword lying near, prepared to defend himself. But it was a false alarm, and all was soon quiet. He was permitted to set fire to the hut of branches, and the bodies of Jansen and Halewyn were consumed to ashes.

The margrave, now that all was over, was about to ride away, when a second time a disturbance arose among the populace. The noise and the tumult became much more serious than before. The officials of the Inquisition and the forces of the margrave fled for their lives, leaving the latter to cope alone with a threatening mob. The record sets him before us "white as a sheet with consternation," but does not tell us that the multitude broke into actual violence.[1] It was much, however, that at this period, with no great leaders to direct them and with the almost supernatural and invincible power of the Inquisition to confront them, the people dared manifest their indignation at all.

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 614–617.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN DE GRAEF: IMPRISONED AT HULST.

THE city of Hulst is situated in the province of Zeeland. It is in that part of its territory which goes by the name of "Flemish Zeeland," because it was once a part of Flanders. It did not belong to Zeeland when the latter entered upon its compact with the six other provinces to form the Dutch republic. For a long time it was held by the republic as conquered territory, and on that account was designated, together with the territories now embraced in the provinces of North Brabant and Limburg, by the curious name of *Generaliteit—i. e.*, "generality"—because it came under the direct jurisdiction of the general government, like the District of Columbia in our republic. De Amicis has this to say of it in his usual lively way: "When the war of independence broke out, the inhabitants of Flemish Zeeland, rather than give it up to the Spaniards, cut their dykes, let in the sea, and, destroying in one day the labor of four centuries, it became once more the gulf of the Middle Ages. The war of independence over, the work of refor-

mation was again commenced, and in three hundred years Flemish Zeeland again emerged from the waters, and was restored to the continent like a daughter that had been dead and was alive again. The inhabitants of Flemish Zeeland, when they inundated their country and rose against the Spanish domination, were still Catholics; consequently, the strange circumstance occurred that, while they went down into the waters good Catholics, they rose to the surface Protestants."

The town of Hulst is famous in the history of the Dutch republic for one of the earliest and most brilliant military exploits on the part of Maurice of Nassau, the son and successor of William of Orange. "It was a place of importance from its situation," says Motley, "its possession by the enemy being a perpetual thorn in the side of the States and a constant obstacle to the plans of Maurice. His arrangements having been made with the customary neatness, celerity and completeness, he received the surrender of the city on the fifth day after his arrival." This was on September 24, 1591. Long before this date it obtained a sadder distinction as the scene of two martyrdoms. Of these we shall notice first the one that was really second in point of time, because the account preserved to us is much more meagre than that of the other, and we may therefore dispose of it here with but a single paragraph.

François Soete was a native of Hulst, and admired by a large circle of friends as a man of elegant manners and possessed of many pleasing social qualities. He was an especial favorite with priests and monks who were fond of the world and its gayeties. After he was converted these men naturally resented his rebukes of their conduct and raised the hue-and-cry of heretic against him. He fled the country, but returned when he supposed that more favorable circumstances had come about. He was arrested. As he was being led to prison he remarked to the persecutors, "You have laid hands upon me to take away my life and bent your spite upon me, thinking you are doing me great harm; but this will be to me as if you took from me a handful of worthless pence and gave me in their stead a handful of gold pieces." In prison he was subjected to a twofold annoyance: he had to listen to the arguments of priests and monks who sought to reason him back to the Romish faith, while a brutal and drunken jailer was permitted to subject him to humiliating cruelties. After a year's imprisonment he was sentenced to die by beheading. On receiving his sentence he said to the judges, "Whereas, therefore, my lords, you desire my blood, I yield this to you with great cheerfulness; but to the almighty Lord of hosts I yield my soul." He was put to death on May 1, 1566, upon the marketplace of Hulst.

In the vicinity of this little city, to-day numbering scarcely three thousand souls, there lived a man by the name of John de Graef. He was a native of a village near the great city of Ghent, in Flanders, but having for many years resided in the territory now belonging to the kingdom of Holland, and having, moreover, endured martyrdom upon Dutch soil, he deserves a place upon the roll of the martyrs of Holland. When the teachings of the Reformation had penetrated to the regions where he dwelt, he soon gave them a fervent reception in his own heart. He was a miller by trade, and occupied a mill which he had rented of the abbot of Bandeloo. It may be imagined that his change of sentiments on the religious questions of the day did not much please his landlord. To evade the annoyances to which he was subjected, and also in order to enjoy greater spiritual advantages, he moved to Antwerp with his young wife and his four young children. He united with the secret congregation which existed there through the connivance of the magistrates, who disliked to enforce the placards. But, as he had not been able to move all his effects at once, he returned a little later to his former home, intending to carry away with him all his remaining property. It proved to be an act of great imprudence, for while he was at the mill he was arrested by the sheriff of Hulst and confined in the prison in that city. This occurred on November 17, 1564.

He was subjected to the usual rigorous and inhuman treatment deemed proper for the prisoners of the Inquisition even before their heresy was proved. He was provided with the least possible food and drink, so that he almost perished with hunger, while he resorted to the most desperate expedients to allay his raging thirst. He was cut off from all communication with his friends, and their kindly endeavors to relieve his necessities only resulted in persecution to themselves and in more hardships, if possible, for De Graef. During the severities of the winter it was customary to permit prisoners to leave their cells a few hours each day in order to warm themselves at the common hearth of the prison, but this privilege was denied to him. His brother, Victor de Graef, and his wife, applied to Hubert Dulle, burgomaster of Hulst, begging that the ordinary privileges of the prisoners might be accorded to their unfortunate friend. "Even if my husband had committed a murder," said the afflicted wife, "his present condition should awaken pity."—"What!" answered Burgomaster Dulle, in a rage; "do you think that your husband, who is a heretic, is better than a murderer, or any other miscreant? Let him abandon his false opinions by which he has bewildered his mind." This was poor consolation for the weeping wife. As the winter—an exceptionally severe one—advanced, the sufferings of the martyr became intense. His hands and feet were

frequently frozen, until at last he could scarcely move about his cell. As if his sufferings from hunger, thirst and the merciless cold were not enough, in the midst of this all he was assailed time and again by the enemies of the faith, in the hope of shaking his resolution and making him renounce his evangelical convictions. They allowed his brother Victor to go to him, accompanied by his four children. Victor said to him, "Oh, dear brother, look upon your children. Have pity upon them, even if you must speak somewhat against your conscience." But John de Graef promptly replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me. Go out from my presence, for I will not follow your evil counsel." Less difficult to resist, but far more persistently annoying, were the attempts of priests and monks to reason him back to their orthodox views. In a letter which he was permitted (strangely enough) to write to his coreligionists at Antwerp, we find recorded very circumstantially a conversation held between himself and two priests, pastors at Hulst—Martin Bartholomeus and Cornelius of Cologne. This conversation gives so clear an insight into the mode of persuasion adopted by the ministers of the prevalent religion that we reproduce it entire.

After some general questions regarding his belief and a full statement by John de Graef defining his evangelical opinions, the priests remarked,

"John, you must believe everything which the infallible Roman Church teaches and ordains."

"I will believe nothing," said De Graef, "which was not spoken by the mouth of the Lord, for it is written that he who adds to or takes from the law of the Lord is accursed. Hence we must conclude that God's law is perfect without your human doctrines."

"You must continually believe more and more," said his opponents, growing very angry inwardly. "What are you, to talk as you do, ignorant and unlearned man that you are? You have no understanding. If you don't believe that Christ's flesh and blood are present in the sacrament and in the Mass, then your faith is false and perverted."

"I do not believe that at all," responded De Graef, "for the Scriptures nowhere teach me this."

"You must believe it, anyhow," said the priests, "for Holy Mother Church believes it and the ancient doctors maintain it."

"I will have nothing to do with a doctrine not contained in the Holy Scriptures," reiterated De Graef.

"You wicked heretic," broke out Pastor Martin; "is it not written, 'This is my body'?"

"Yes," readily answered his humble disputant, "but it is also written, 'I am the vine,' 'I am the way,' and yet is Christ no vine or way. Therefore must 'this is my body' also be spiritually under-

stood, even as declared distinctly in the sixth of John: 'The flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.'"

"You lie," was the gentle rejoinder on the part of the learned pastor, "you heretic! this is not so written. It were better for you to mind your mill than to discuss these matters."

"Let a Bible be brought," quietly answered De Graef, "and I will point it out to you."

At this conference was present a third person who had not hitherto spoken. He now said to the priests, in Latin.

"Send for a Bible."

This was accordingly done, and this person showed the passage in question to the priests. Their conduct thereupon is characteristic of the men of their stripe who ventured upon a controversy with the Reformed.

"This must be interpreted differently," said they. "You have no knowledge of these things." Then, subsiding into the far more comfortable process of terrorizing, they added, "If you will not let go your opinions, it will be the worse for you."

"If I must suffer for the sake of the truth," De Graef replied, "my reward shall be great with the Lord."

"Ha!" exclaimed his opponents; "you refuse, then, to renounce your faith? You will be compelled

to do so. Do you not know that the magistrate has the power to put you to death?"

This finished the argument; it was the only field of reasoning where they, and such as they, were invincible, for, as Brandt remarks, it was much easier to burn heretics than to refute them.

By invitation of these doughty disputants who had so triumphantly answered their starved and half-frozen antagonist, the notorious Peter Titelman —pre-eminent among the inquisitors for his ferocity and zeal—came to Hulst. "Contemporary chronicles give a picture of him," says Motley, "as of some grotesque yet terrible goblin careering through the country by night or day, alone, on horseback, smiting the trembling peasants on the head with a great club, spreading dismay far and wide, dragging suspected persons from their firesides or their beds and thrusting them into dungeons, arresting, torturing, strangling, burning, with hardly the shadow of a warrant, information or process." It was hoped that by some of these forceful persuasive methods Titelman might succeed with the obstinate John de Graef, where the honest pastors of Hulst had failed.

CHAPTER XV.

JOHN DE GRAEF: TRIAL AND EXECUTION.

MOTLEY'S graphic account cited at the close of our last chapter gives us a sufficiently vivid impression of Inquisitor Titelman's outrageous methods in capturing heretics. The history of this martyrdom puts us into the possession of further details which illustrate his manner of conducting the trials of his prisoners.

Emaciated by two months of starvation, maimed by the severity of the winter's frost, John de Graef, innocent, harmless, a man of exemplary private virtues and of the fairest fame in the community, but a heretic on suspicion, was brought forth from his dungeon on January 21, 1565, to face Inquisitor Peter Titelman, bearing the commission of Pope and king. The Dutch language does not borrow of the Latin or Greek to express its ideas: it calls an inquisitor, therefore, a *Geloofsrechter*—a "judge of the faith;" and this gives us a clearer idea of the office this man held. He exercised the functions of a judge, but his province was an infinitely more delicate one than that of a civil judge. His depart-

ment was religion—to try cases of departure from the established and orthodox faith. Bearing this exalted ideal of his office in mind, his manner of conducting a trial will appear all the more refreshingly novel.

The court was held in a public-house called "The Swan." Here the burgomaster of Hulst and the other town-officials had gathered, and Titelman, "by merit raised to that bad eminence," presided. A great fire burned upon the ample hearth. The first act in the proceedings was to place the prisoner close to this fire. Remembering that his extremities were half frozen, we can imagine how grateful to the man's feelings the heat of this fire must have been; we are not surprised to learn that he fainted outright. When this little episode was past, the trial at once began by Titelman's putting the following question to the accused:

"John, inasmuch as we are assembled here to learn what are your convictions, I ask you, What is your opinion of the Romish Church and the papal doctrines?"

"I have repeatedly and with all frankness declared my convictions," replied De Graef, from whose answers, for the sake of brevity, we shall select only the most telling points. "If, sirs, you can prove by the word of the Lord that the faith which I hold is erroneous or in the least opposed to the truth, I shall abandon it at once; but if you cannot do

this, why do you retain me a prisoner and seek my death?"

"Do you not believe," was the lucid response of the inquisitor to this appeal, "that God is present in the Mass in flesh and blood—even as he was born of Mary and as he walked, stood, and hung upon the cross—especially when the Host is elevated?"

"No, not at all," answered John; "for, since God cannot be confined within temples made by men's hands, how can he be shut up within a crumb of bread or a chalice? That this cannot be done you may see for yourself in my Testament here," handing Titelman the volume he carried with him.

At this an ungovernable fury got possession of the judge. He snatched the book from John's hands and hurled it among the blazing logs, but one of the attendants rescued it before it caught fire. After estimating the status of John's religious opinions by the light of Scripture in this patient and painstaking manner, as a "judge of the faith" was bound to do, Titelman next resorted to an effusion of Billingsgate:

"Oh, you false prophet, you hellish heretic, you wretch, you miscreant!" Such and such like epithets came in a torrent from the judicial bench. "I could strike you in the face," he added, and actually leaned forward to administer the proposed chastisement.

One of the town-officials, who felt that this was altogether too gross a violation of propriety and decency, checked the infuriated inquisitor and brought him back to a little better control of his feelings. Addressing himself once more to the investigation of De Graef's heresy, the inquisitor said,

"How, then, you miscreant! Will you not believe that the Lord your God is in the sacrament? You wicked heretic! Do you not believe in the seven sacraments? Do you not believe that there is a purgatory where souls are purified after death?"

"I would gladly believe all this," answered John, "if you could prove it to me by God's word."

Hereupon, Titelman sprang to his feet, exclaiming, "Are not the things I ask you about found in God's word?" and then he poured forth a string of apt quotations from the writings of popish authorities entirely bearing him out.

John's only reply to this was a dignified silence, deeming it beneath him to argue against the childish teachings of mediæval monks, when the Bible itself was thrown out of consideration in the trial to which he was being subjected.

This silence, however, was quite as provoking to Titelman as were John's previous answers. Gnashing his teeth with vexation, he shouted,

"You depraved Calvinist! you devilish heretic! you wretch! You have a silent devil within you.

Ha! ha! but I'll cast him out! Do you not tremble?" he continued, pointing to the leaping flames on the hearth. "We will throw you into such a fire and let you be burned to death if you do not abandon your faith."

"I do not fear a fire like this," answered John, quietly but firmly, "but rather that everlasting fire which is never quenched."

Seeing that his victim's firmness could not be shaken, the inquisitor, in the presence of the town-officials, formally pronounced sentence of death upon him, and as one who had put himself outside the pale of the Romish Church he delivered him, soul and body, into the power of the devil.

The burgomaster, hoping that gentleness would accomplish what Titelman's violence had failed to do, now addressed a few words of entreaty to the prisoner, begging him to be persuaded of the error of his ways; but when it was seen that fair words produced the desired result no better than foul words had done, De Graef was remanded to the miseries of his dungeon. Two thin slices of rye bread, with some rancid butter and a small quantity of foul water, was assigned to him for his daily rations.

About the middle of February the whole case as it had then progressed—*i. e.*, the confession of the prisoner's faith and the investigation before the inquisitor—was laid by the magistrates of Hulst

before the supreme council or court of Flanders, asking for their decision. These learned gentlemen had a wholesome regard for the favor of the king and the safety of their necks, and could not but decide that after so clear a confession of heresy the accused was to be sentenced to death. The supreme court, the inquisitor, the magistrates, all concurring in this momentous decision, sentence of death was now fully determined upon, and the date for its execution was fixed.

But a slight formality had hitherto been omitted, and it was thought that now was the time to attend to it. John de Graef had been imprisoned on suspicion of heresy, had been put on trial for his life and had been sentenced to death, but as yet he had not enjoyed the privilege of legal counsel. The sheriff of Hulst insisted that a lawyer be now procured in order to make the proceedings regular. Accordingly, De Graef dictated to this professional person in proper form his answers to the several specifications regarding his heresy, proving from Scripture that his opinions were not heretical, but Catholic and true. This document was presented by the lawyer to the magistrates of Hulst, as they had requested that he should do. His reception by them was, therefore, rather startling: he was vehemently rebuked for daring to present such a paper and commanded to beseech their pardon. He refused to do this, saying, "At your own instance I gave

my professional aid to the prisoner; all that is herein maintained is based upon clear and unmistakable proofs from Scripture, as you may yourself see by consulting the Bible. Why, then, should I apologize?" The magistrates, however, did not waste any time in attempting to answer the unanswerable; they immediately sent in a complaint against the honest barrister to the supreme court of Flanders. This body condemned the counselor to pay a heavy fine and to make a public and humiliating apology to the magistrates of Hulst. It is by just such characteristic incidents as these, which can hardly be taken up by the pages of our general histories, that we gain an insight clear as the day into the condition of those times.

At noon on Tuesday, February 27, 1565, John de Graef was taken from his dungeon and conducted to the town-hall. Here his sentence was read to him. It condemned him to be strangled at the stake, his body to be burned and all his effects to be confiscated. When the document had been read, the martyr addressed the officials and the assembled people with great freedom of speech, declaring the truth of Christ and his faith in the doctrines for which he was to die. Turning to the magistrates, he said, "My lords, you must all at one time appear before the judgment-seat of Christ as I stand before you to-day, and there every one must give an account of his deeds done in the body; consider, therefore,

what you are doing. See to it why you condemn me, for I protest that my faith rests upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles."

While the magistrates had been dealing in the high-handed manner we have described, the citizens of Hulst do not seem to have sympathized with their action. It was impossible to purchase wood and straw, for the purposes of the execution, of the dealers residing within the walls of the city. The sheriff and his officers met everywhere with flat refusals, and it became a question whether the sentence could be executed at the hour set for it. At last a peasant coming into town with a load of wood was compelled to deposit it upon the market-place.[1]

When all was ready, John de Graef was led from the town-hall; upon the market-square, in front of it, the stake had been erected. As a result of the insufferable cold frequently freezing his extremities, his toes dropped from his feet,[2] and he limped painfully along to the place of execution. Yet his spirit, sustained by grace, rose superior to the weakness and pain of the body, and he cheerfully met his doom. He prayed earnestly for the conversion of his persecutors, and said to the spectators, "My dear people, I suffer this in the cause of truth; abide ye also in the truth." By order of the magistrates, the executioner hung about his neck the copy of the New Testament which he had consulted so

[1] Brandt, *Historie*, I. p. 271. [2] *Ibid.*

diligently, and with which he had so frequently supported his opinions.[1] This act of petty spite certainly does not redound to their glory, already sufficiently tarnished by this whole proceeding.

As in one or two of the cases lately mentioned, a hut of inflammable materials was constructed. Into this John de Graef stepped of his own accord and placed himself at the stake. Standing there, his last words were, "O Lord God, O heavenly Father, have mercy upon me! O merciful Father, receive my spirit!" Then he was strangled, his body consumed, and another martyr had sealed with his death the truth of the gospel as against the superstitions of Rome.[2]

[1] Brandt, *Historie*, I. p. 271. [2] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 767.

CHAPTER XVI.

HEYNZOON ADRIAANS OF HAARLEM.

OUR first thought when we set foot in Haarlem was to look up memorials of its famous siege. The duke of Alva supposed that he would soon reduce a town whose fortifications were notoriously feeble, but, beginning the siege on December 10, 1572, it was not till July 12, 1573, that the city capitulated. Moreover, it proved a costly victory for Spain, twelve thousand veteran soldiers lying dead behind the trenches of the besiegers. The chief assault on two critical occasions, graphically and circumstantially described by Motley, had been directed against the Cross Gate and the St. John's Gate and the portion of the walls between. We found that one very picturesque gate was preserved as a relic of former days, but the two just mentioned are no more. We encountered, however, two streets at no great distance from and parallel to each other, one of which was called the "Cross street" and the other "St. John's street." We readily surmised that these thoroughfares were named after the historic gates; we needed but to follow the

streets to where they crossed the city moat, therefore, to identify the spots occupied by them of old. The walls here, as in most other cities, have been leveled, and beautiful park-like boulevards have taken their place.

A walk into the heart of the town along either street brings us ere long to the "great," or St. Bavo, church. Here is the famous organ—the largest in the world from about the middle of the last century till in the Boston Music Hall there was placed one still larger not very many years ago. A solitary cannon-ball half embedded in the plaster of the south wall, near the pulpit, dates from the siege, and was thrown into the city from a Spanish gun. Continuing our walk, we find ourselves soon under the cool shades of a primeval forest. A long lane with four rows of very ancient trees, lofty and umbrageous, is called the "Spanish lane," for here the German contingent of the Spanish army lay encamped in those trying days. The Haarlem lake is no more, and in the stead of its boisterous waters smiling meadows of luxuriant pasturage or golden fields of grain present themselves to the view.

Our review of the martyrs of Holland has brought us into the very vortex of those stirring events which we have already briefly noticed in one of the chapters of Part I. It may be well to recall them right here still more briefly in order to get a correct idea of the times at which we have now arrived. These,

indeed, still witnessed martyrdoms among other things, but they were rapidly preparing the country for a state of affairs that would make martyrdom for civil or religious liberty impossible.

The martyrs whose fate occupied us in the previous chapter died, respectively, on February 27, 1565, and May 1, 1566. Between these dates is that of April 5, 1566, when the "Petition of the Nobles" was presented at Brussels. The field-preachings and the image-breakings follow in quick succession during this same year. In 1567, Alva came into the land with his army of veterans, and as a consequence William of Orange went to Germany and began hostilities in 1568. The battle of Heiligerlee was fought and won on May 23, or little more than a month before the martyrdom which shall engage our attention in this chapter. It will be remembered that toward the close of this same year of 1568, in November, the first Synod of the Reformed churches met in the city of Wesel, on the Rhine.

In the midst of all these thrilling, painful and critical events, in November, 1567, occurred the event of most interest to us at present. At that time a worthy citizen of Haarlem, Heynzoon Adriaans, was taken into custody on the charge of adherence to the Reformed doctrines; he had been converted during one of those frequent field-preachings in 1566. The first of these remarkable serv-

ices in the vicinity of Haarlem had been held on Sunday, July 22, of that year, in the sandhills near the village of Overveen, a mile or two from the city. The magistrates had sought to prevent the people of Haarlem from attending them, having ordered the gates to be kept closed, but several burghers climbed over the walls and swam the moat, and finally the indignation of the multitudes who wished to enjoy this service became so great and threatening that the authorities were compelled to yield. Later, the services were held nearer the city, and at last with considerable regularity in the forest already mentioned, not far from the town gates. Indeed, the Reformed doctrines gained so many adherents that it was deemed expedient to grant them some concessions, and thus they were permitted to put up a building upon the fields outside the town.

Adriaans was diligent in his attendance at these services, and became very active himself in extending the knowledge of the truth. He was a shoemaker by trade, but at the same time president of the *Pelican*,[1] one of the "Rhetorical Chambers" prevalent in those days where men of all trades tried their hand at literature. He composed several songs of a didactic nature in which he assailed Romish errors. One device of his for spreading evangelical knowledge among the masses was quite

[1] Brandt, Vol. I. p. 481.

ingenious, and, though it would offend the literary taste of to-day, was quite in keeping with the productions of many pens more gifted than his own. It was called an "echo." A few specimens will give a tolerably correct idea of the original, even in translation:

"Where now are the priests and monks who sang as a lark? In the dark.

"Did their doctrines of God amount to aught? Naught.

"Are any of their teachings with God's word at one? None.

"Why do priests the people to Masses for the dead constrain? For gain.

"What are priests and monks and the Jesuits? Hypocrites.

"With what are the preachers who speak in the fields in accord? God's word.

"By whom are they sent into the land abroad? By God."

It will be seen that this was excellently adapted to the understanding of the common people and could easily be retained by the poorest memory. Adriaans scattered printed copies of it among such of the people as could read, while for the benefit of those who could not read he would gather a crowd of people around him and then put to his oldest son, who accompanied him for that purpose, each question as above constructed, who thereupon would give the "echo" of the last word as its answer.

This conspicuous activity on the part of Adriaans could not remain unnoticed by the Romish authorities; they complained against him before the mag-

istrates. But the world was moving; the year 1566 had not passed for nothing; the spirit of liberty was getting abroad, and the priests could not now so readily have it all their own way. Besides, Haarlem was not in one of the southern provinces, near the seat of government, and consequently men were not so ready to comply with the requirements of the placards here. In short, Adriaans was left unmolested for quite a while. But in August, 1567, Don Alva had come into the country, the Blood Council was soon in full operation and the halcyon days of fast and furious persecution were coming back again to the Inquisition. In November, 1567, Adriaans was arrested. He was placed in confinement in the St. John's Gate, destined to figure so prominently in the siege, five years later. In this prison he found a young man called Barend of Utrecht, also in durance for the faith. He had not given evidence of his convictions either by preaching or by rhyming. The charge against him was unique; it does not seem very heinous: he had overturned the wooden image of some saint and hacked it to pieces. A third prisoner was a certain John Heymen, also of Haarlem. His offence was again different. When Regent Margaret retracted the meagre privileges granted in the summer of 1566 before the image-breaking, the people of the city of Valenciennes—now on French territory, but then in one of the Walloon Netherlands, where the Reformed

largely predominated—refused to yield what they had so recently obtained. They were encouraged to this firmness by two preachers, one of whom was Guy de Bres, the author of the Belgic Confession. The city was declared in a state of siege, and Margaret sent an army against it. The siege lasted from early winter of 1566 to early spring of 1567. After the city was taken De Bres was put to death. Meanwhile, the struggle had been keenly watched all through the provinces, and Count Brederode had gone so far as to enlist troops for the relief of Valenciennes. He was not the man to carry such a bold and delicate scheme to success, and his effort resulted in irretrievable disaster to himself and to all those who had supported him. John Heymen had been one of his soldiers, and the offence was sufficiently grave, both politically and religiously, to warrant his arrest.

The three companions in misfortune spent the winter together in the St. John's Gate, where their quarters were not made very comfortable as the season grew more severe. But the youth who had expended so much wrath upon the wooden saint was a source of great consolation to his fellow-sufferers. He was invariably cheerful; and when Adriaans felt depressed as he thought of his eight motherless children, Barend sought to impart to him some of his own cheer, pointing out to him the strength and comfort to be derived from God's promises.

On June 29, 1568, the three prisoners were brought forth to execution, their sentence having condemned them to be put to death by hanging. John Heymen and Barend of Utrecht were each successively led from prison and executed; and when both had been expeditiously despatched, Adriaans was led from prison to the market-place. This is shut in on the south by the lofty pile of the St. Bavo church, while on the west side stands the quaint and unpretending town-hall, formerly used as a residence by the counts of Holland. Arrived here, beneath the gallows he addressed the spectators, admonishing them to renounce their idolatry and to accept the true religion. Then, after spending a few moments in prayer, he adjusted his dress for the execution. The executioner was about to treat him in some ignominious manner customary with ordinary criminals, but Adriaans protested against this, saying, "I do not die as a murderer or thief or evil-doer; I die as a Christian." When all was ready for the death-penalty, he exclaimed, "Lord, now do unto thy servant according to thy promise in the gospel: 'He that endureth unto the end shall be saved.'"

A singular natural event suddenly arrested the proceedings at this stage: a loud noise was heard above men's heads, and for an instant the earth seemed to tremble. Whatever it was—very likely it was nothing but a sudden clap of thunder—yet, coming as it did at this juncture, it greatly startled the

multitudes upon the market-place. The executioner ran away affrighted, leaving Adriaans standing unharmed upon the ladder; he accordingly descended to the ground. The disturbance in the atmosphere passing away as quickly as it had occurred, the priests and the monks regained their composure and led in an onslaught upon the unfortunate martyr. They dragged him with great violence toward the town-hall, striking his head against a stone paling in front of the building. They hurried him into the hall and up one flight of stairs into the council-room, where the portraits of the early counts and countesses adorned the walls then as now, but where now also may be seen a painting of the siege. Here they finished the work of death upon Adriaans. Next taking his body and that of the two other martyrs, they hung them side by side upon a gallows outside the city.

The account in the *Groot Martelaarsboek* ("Great Martyrs' Book") concludes as follows: "This history is taken down from the mouth of the great-grandsons of Heynzoon Adriaans, and of some aged burghers of the city of Haarlem who were eye- and ear-witnesses of it all."[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 846–848; Brandt, Vol. I. pp. 481–484.

CHAPTER XVII.

MARTYRDOMS IN SOUTHERN HOLLAND.

BY Southern Holland we mean the two provinces of North Brabant and Limburg, and it will soon appear why we group together the martyrdoms which occurred in this section of the country or emphasize them at all.

We visited three prominent cities of Southern Holland—Breda, Bois-le-duc, or 'S Hertogenbosch (the French and Dutch for "*the Duke's Forest*"), and Maastricht. Our recollections of Breda have no special significance here; those of the Bois-le-duc and Maastricht are in place.

The most prominent object of interest in the former city is beyond all comparison the St. John's church; it ranks among the three largest churches of Holland, and this is saying much when many of the others are immense. The cathedral at Utrecht, before the nave was demolished by a hurricane in 1674, and the St. Nicholas church at Kampen, in Overyssel, are its only rivals, but these, again, are surpassed by St. John's church in richness of architectural ornamentation. It had been thirty-four

years in process of building when Columbus set out for America, and was finished in the year of his death. Standing upon the ample square to the right of it, a most unique feature arrested our attention. The nave rises above roofed aisles, as in all great structures of this kind, flying-buttresses extending from the walls of the nave to meet the perpendicular buttresses of the lower walls. There was nothing unusual in all this. But the ridges of these flying-buttresses presented a curious spectacle such as we had seen nowhere else, either at Cologne, at Brussels, at Antwerp or in any of the cities of Holland. Six figures sat astride upon each of them, as if they were crawling up toward the gargoyles above them, with their backs to the street. Some of these looked like peasants carrying bags or baskets; some resembled apes, and may have been meant to symbolize imps of darkness. And that this was no extravagant conceit of the modern architect who is "restoring" the building was evident from the decayed portions around the choir, where the remains of just such figures could still readily be traced.

But it is into the interior of this church that we must go if we would be impressed with the chief characteristic of the part of Holland of which we are speaking. Where are the bare whitewashed walls to which we grow accustomed in the Protestant cathedrals of the North? Here is no empty, altarless choir; images and pictures and altars and

burning tapers and kneeling votaries all break upon the astonished vision. We imagine we must have been suddenly transported to Antwerp or to St. Gudule's at Brussels, or to some other gorgeous temple in Catholic lands. Chapels and shrines retiring within dimly-lighted nooks, and scores of people there mumbling their half-audible prayers before the image of some saint of special efficacy,—surely these are strange scenes in Holland. True, many beautiful Catholic churches may be seen in all the Northern cities, but nowhere, not even in Breda, had we encountered such preponderance of Romanism that the "great," or cathedral, church had been retained for that worship for which it had been originally built; for the triumph of the Reformation in Holland is significantly manifested everywhere by the fact that Protestants worship in those very cathedrals which had once been Rome's.

On the way from Bois-le-duc, in the northern part of North Brabant, to Maastricht, in the utmost southern extremity of Limburg and of the kingdom, we traversed the whole length of Catholic Holland, and we were not permitted to forget where we were. At a railroad-junction not far from Bois-le-duc we encountered a figure which led our imagination away back to the Middle Ages. It was that of a monk with bare head and hair streaming in the wind, clothed in a coarse brown gown loosely hung about him, reaching to the feet and secured at the

waist with a rope; his feet were bare, with sandals underneath; a long, rude stick served as his staff. It was somewhat disappointing to see such a specimen of the olden time searching for a seat in a railway-coach, and entering a second-class compartment at that. There was much more congruity about another person of his order whom not long after we saw trudging along on foot on a country-road.

At Maastricht the cathedral-church—that of St. Servatius—is also devoted to the Catholic worship. We cannot dwell upon its appearance, with its suggestions of the days of imperial Rome or its statue of Charlemagne. We only mention that here we were taken into a "treasure-chamber," and were permitted to feast our eyes upon the splendid reliquary containing the body of St. Servatius entire, as well as upon various limbs and bones of saints, and even of apostles, set in costly jewels. In short, we might as well have been in the similar room connected with the Cologne cathedral, for it was all just as intensely Catholic, and yet we were still on Dutch territory. But in Maastricht, of a population of twenty-nine thousand, there were twenty-four thousand Catholics; in Bois-le-duc, of twenty-five thousand, the Catholics numbered twenty thousand; and of Breda's eighteen thousand people fifteen thousand souls owned the sway of Rome. Hence we may well say that "Southern Holland" and "Catholic Holland" are synonymous terms.

The political history of the republic of Holland, wherewith two of the greatest of American historians have made the world acquainted, is so clearly bound up with that of the Reformed Church, the revolution grew so directly out of the religious persecutions, that we can hardly think of that country even to-day except as identified only and altogether with Protestantism. Why, then, is this one part of Holland so prevailingly Catholic? A word or two of explanation may be of interest.

North Brabant and Limburg were not included among the original seven provinces which formed the Dutch republic; they were still Spanish property while the United Netherlands were free. One by one, however, their cities were wrested from the power of the foreign despot and held by garrisons of the republic. When we look upon maps of the Dutch commonwealth as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, we observe that these provinces are designated by the term to which we alluded in a former chapter. They were part of the "Generality," were considered conquered territory and administered as such. This was very unjust toward the people of North Brabant, however, for as early as 1629, or nineteen years before the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Eighty Years' War, Bois-le-duc, its capital, had been taken by the forces of the republic. The population of the province were heartily in sympathy with the cause of freedom, and

frequently petitioned that it be received as a member of the union on an equal footing with the other States. The case of Limburg was somewhat different; broken, disconnected bits of its present territory belonged to the Crown of Austria and to the United Netherlands all the way down to 1785. It was not till after the French occupation and the times of Napoleon that unity was given to these intermingled possessions and they became a homogeneous province. Moreover, not only did not these conquered sections form a part of the Protestant republic, but they remained as pronouncedly and prevalently Catholic as any of the provinces which continued obedient to Spain. A Dutch writer supposes that this was the main reason why the United Netherlands were opposed for so long a time to admitting North Brabant into their confederation. It is, therefore, an interesting and instructive fact that upon this soil fell the blood of many of the martyrs of Holland. The very contrast between that historic circumstance and the scenes that may be witnessed here to-day makes the study of it all the more piquant. If here the traditional "seed of the Church" has failed to bear fruit, we should not hide the fact that the seed fell and the blood of the martyrs was shed, for none the less by their sufferings the Church of Holland was benefited and enriched, the influence being felt in other parts if not here.

The list of martyrs who were put to death at

Bois-le-duc—an unusually long one—began with four men beheaded and burned in the year 1533. In the next year another was sacrificed in the cause of truth; and in 1538, Gertrude, wife of William Hoogendoorn—the second woman of Holland of whom the record of martyrology makes mention—was burned at Vucht, a village near Bois-le-duc and subject to its magistrates. Again, at the instance of the municipality, five persons at once suffered martyrdom at the same village in 1542, two women being burned alive and one buried alive, while the men were both burned.[1]

The next martyrdom to be noticed took place in the town of Heusden. Here we are upon Protestant ground again, although the place is but little over five miles west of Bois-le-duc. On the map of 1530 it was included within the province of South Holland, but now it is a part of North Brabant. It was in the vicinity of Heusden that the Rev. P. H. Scholte was pastor of three country churches. The Classis of Heusden suspended him from the ministry for favoring the secession in Friesland, and subsequently—now about forty years ago—he led to this country a large emigration who settled at Pella, Iowa. In Heusden there lived a certain estimable burgher, called, from his occupation, Jacob the Weaver. Although he was known to have embraced the Reformed doctrines, his gentle

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 147, 151, 166, 170.

and amiable disposition retained for him even the friendship of the Romanists. One among the latter, however, proved an exception: this was no less a person than the governor of Heusden, a Baron Spiering. He determined to crush the heretic, but he was aware of the good feeling entertained toward Jacob among the citizens, and he did not, therefore, venture to arrest him openly. He resided at a castle near Heusden; inducing Jacob to come to this place in the way of his business, he seized his person and cast him into a dungeon. Every endeavor was made during a prolonged confinement to move the prisoner from his faith. When this was seen to be hopeless, Spiering brought him before the magistrates at Heusden, who, at the instance of the governor, condemned him to be beheaded upon the market-place. This happened in the year 1566.[1]

Two years later Peter of Cologne, a goldsmith, and his domestic, Betsy, suffered martyrdom at Breda. As we have seen, this city is largely Catholic to-day. The barony of Breda was the personal property of the prince of Orange, and, in 1590, Maurice, the son of William, captured it from the hands of the Spaniards by as neat and heroic a stratagem as is to be found in the annals of war. The above-named Peter had for quite a while served as one of the elders in the Reformed congregation. He labored very diligently for their up-

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 795.

building, and gave them the use of his own house for their assemblies. Such prominence in the cause of the Reformation could not long remain without its usual penalty. Toward the close of 1567 he was arrested by the authorities and cast into the common jail. Here he was visited by many of his fellow-Christians, until the magistrates ordered him to be confined at the castle of Breda. This was a sort of palace and citadel combined; as remodeled by William III. of Orange, king of England, in 1696, it still exists, and is used to-day as a military school where officers are trained for the army. He was entirely cut off from his friends here, but he was permitted to retain in his service a domestic by the name of Betsy. The latter had herself been converted to the new faith, and, being well versed in Scripture and enjoying a rich Christian experience, she was a source of great spiritual comfort to her master. But this at last came to the knowledge of his persecutors, whereupon the faithful woman was also placed under arrest. Two months later, on May 29, 1568—six days after the battle of Heiligerlee, the Lexington of the Dutch revolution—the two martyrs were led forth to execution. Peter had been nearly a year in prison, and had been subjected to cruel tortures at several examinations. On their way to the market-place their brethren and sisters in the faith, who made up a great part of the attending crowds, bemoaned their

fate in audible manner, but Betsy spoke cheerfully to them, saying that she feared not them that killed the body—that she was going to Christ, her Bridegroom. Then both she and her master threw themselves upon their knees in prayer, and with the name of God upon their lips they expired among the flames.[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 842, 843.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MARTYRDOMS IN SOUTHERN HOLLAND.—CONTINUED.

WE return now to a brief notice of a few more martyrdoms which occurred in the city of Bois-le-duc, the capital of North Brabant—a place where, in spite of this courageous and painful witnessing, the light of the Reformation seems to have quite failed, even to the present day, to dispel the darkness of Romish superstition.

In one month—that of July, 1568—no less than five persons suffered death for their faith upon the market-place of Bois-le-duc. On the 16th four were hanged at once, but history, besides mentioning their names and occupations, gives no particulars of their arrest or execution.

On the 20th, Michael Rombouts was executed. He had been dragged from his bed in the night in August, 1567—the very month in which Alva came into the country. Rombouts was an aged man of high social standing and very much beloved by his fellow-townsmen. He was placed in confinement in one of the city gates, which often served such pur-

poses. His age did not save him from the usual examination by torture, which, added to an imprisonment of eleven months, told severely upon the worthy old man. He had acted as deacon in the secret Reformed congregation, and special activity in the cause of heresy such as this always brought after it the more cruel treatment. On the day set for his execution a riot nearly occurred, and, some German mercenaries charging upon the people, several were wounded and some killed. Quiet was restored, however, and while Rombouts was pouring forth his heart in prayer previous to ascending the gallows he was distinctly heard to beseech the Lord that he would vouchsafe some sign which should attest his innocence. "No sooner, accordingly, had he been pushed off the ladder by the executioner than there occurred such a sudden darkness and fearful storm of wind, hail and thunder and lightning that it seemed as if the end of the world had come. Before and after the execution of the sentence not a cloud was to be seen in the sky, while the storm had extended to a not much greater distance than three or four miles beyond the city in all directions. Doubtless, God meant in this way to bear testimony to the rightfulness of the martyr's cause."[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 848. We can find no account of this singular occurrence in any other authority; we give it, therefore, for what it is worth to any one, on the assertion of this single, no doubt conscientious, compiler.

We notice briefly that in the very next month, August, 1568, four citizens of Bois-le-duc were hanged and one was beheaded on account of their adherence to the Reformation;[1] after which, we observe that this same city, reeking with the blood of so many martyrs, contributed one of its citizens to the roll of those executed at Antwerp. His name was Goris, a tinsmith by trade. He went to live at Antwerp after his conversion, which occurred when he was fifty years old. He joined the congregation of the Reformed, who still maintained their existence there all through the terrific administration of the duke of Alva. Becoming very active and frequently opening his house to their assemblies, he became an object of persecution by the priests. But Alva was no longer in the land and the Blood Council had ceased to be, and the ecclesiastics at first could only procure his banishment from the city. Goris went to the province of Holland, where the siege of Leyden was now (1574) in progress, and where the first Synod that was ever held within Dutch territory met, in the city of Dort, in June of that year. Remaining here but a short time, he ventured to return to Antwerp to effect some final business settlements. No sooner had he entered the province of Brabant, however, than he was arrested. This occurred at Breda, October 3, 1574, the very day of the relief of Leyden. He was conveyed to

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 851.

Antwerp and subjected to exceptionally severe tortures to make him reveal his friends, but it availed nothing. Goris was burned alive and his body consumed to ashes on October 21, 1574.[1]

One more case claims our attention in the present connection. We can hardly call it a martyrdom, and yet it illustrates very vividly the malignant rage of the priests of Rome against the adherents of the Reformed faith. Neesken de Greef, a woman eighty years of age, was for many years a member of the secret congregation at Bois-le-duc. In 1581 she fell dangerously ill, and her neighbors made known the fact to the priest of St. John's church, Masius by name, who afterward became bishop of Bois-le-duc. He hastened to the bedside of the aged lady, not aware that she was affected by the hated heresy. He had accordingly taken the Host with him, and proceeded to administer extreme unction. She promptly arrested the ceremony, however, to the horror of the priest, by exclaiming, "Go out from my presence! I have a living God in the heavens who will save me." In a few moments she breathed her last. She could not, therefore, be dealt with in the ordinary manner and be condemned to suffer death for her faith; nevertheless, the priest resolved to have his revenge upon the senseless remains. Her body was dragged on a hurdle to the market-place and buried amid impo-

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 941.

tent indignities beneath the gallows. But in 1629, when Bois-le-duc was taken by the State's troops, the body was removed and buried in an honorable manner beneath the pavement of the St. John's cathedral, which at that time was handed over to the use of the Reformed Church.[1]

We have hitherto noticed only the martyrs who suffered upon the soil of North Brabant, while the subject of these two chapters requires us to record also those of the other province constituting Southern, or Catholic, Holland. We have no record of individual martyrdoms endured at Maastricht, but history furnishes us with two incidents which show that in these southern parts the people could struggle and die for their religion as heroically as the citizens of Zutphen, Naarden and Haarlem in the North.

In 1576, by a sudden and bold exertion of patriotic bravery, the people of Maastricht had driven the Spaniards from the city. Their triumph was but momentary; the Spanish troops regained the place. "Maastricht was recovered," says Motley, "and indiscriminate slaughter instantly avenged its temporary loss. The plundering, stabbing, drowning, burning, ravishing, were so dreadful that, in the words of a contemporary historian, 'the burghers who had escaped the fight had reason to think themselves less fortunate than those who died

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 945; Brandt, *Historie*, Vol. I. p. 688.

with arms in their hands.'" This sounds very much like a description of Zutphen's calamity. But, while Zutphen and Naarden were visited once, Maastricht had a second baptism of blood. Zutphen and Naarden did not endure the horrors of a siege like that of Haarlem; Maastricht bore all that Haarlem did besides. In March, 1579, the prince of Parma appeared before it with a large and well-equipped army. Boldly were his assaults resisted. Motley tells us how the citizens fought for their hearths and homes and faith: "All were armed to the teeth and fought with what seemed superhuman valor. The women, fierce as tigresses defending their young, swarmed to the walls and fought in the foremost rank. They threw pails of boiling water on the besiegers, they hurled firebrands in their faces, they quoited blazing pitch-hoops with unerring dexterity about their necks." This seems like an echo of the siege of Haarlem, wherewith we are more familiar. But Haarlem's citizens were attacked only twice and only at one point each time, whereas, while this desperate defence just described was going on at the Bois-le-duc gate another attack was going on at the Tongres gate, on the opposite side of the city; and when both had been successfully resisted, a third assault was made at the Brussels gate a few weeks later. The city was taken by surprise in the end, and then came the second massacre. "A cry of agony arose," says

Motley, "which was distinctly heard at the distance of a league. On the first day four thousand men and women were slaughtered. The massacre lasted two days longer. It was said that not four hundred citizens were left alive after the termination of the siege." Yes, and that explains the reason why, after this wholesale martyrdom for the cause of the Reformed faith, the city is still, in the nineteenth century, almost wholly given to Roman superstition. The place was depopulated, and those who were introduced to take the place of the slain were obedient to the ancient faith.

Before we dismiss the consideration of Catholic Holland it seems but just to take note of one circumstance not usually emphasized by Protestant historians. Let it be observed, then, that while, as we said before, the political history and the religious history of Holland go hand in hand, and the country seems naturally identified with Protestantism alone, yet the earliest movements in the cause of patriotism were by no means confined to the Protestants only. The Compromise—the earliest league against oppression—was signed by two thousand nobles and united Catholics and Reformed in one common endeavor to stop the outrages of despotism. The "Petition of the Nobles," presented in 1566, sought relief from the infringements of the country's liberties as well as from the inhuman persecutions of the Inquisition, yet a very small pro-

portion of these petitioners were of the Reformed faith. The first serious alienation of Catholics from the cause of freedom was occasioned by the fierce outburst of image-breaking in the summer of 1566, but even after this William of Orange succeeded, ten years later, in uniting all the seventeen provinces in a compact against the Spanish oppression and the Spanish Inquisition. This triumph of statesmanship was called the "Pacification of Ghent," and but two of all the provinces entering into this combination for political and religious liberty were distinctively Protestant—namely, Holland and Zeeland.

King Philip, too, well understood this position of the Catholics of the provinces. He did not contemplate their exemption from the butcheries to be achieved by the duke of Alva. "Early in the year," says Motley, "the most sublime sentence of death was promulgated which has ever been pronounced since the creation of the world. Upon the 16th of February, 1568, a sentence of the Holy Inquisition condemned *all the inhabitants* of the Netherlands *to death* as heretics. A proclamation of the king dated ten days later confirmed this decree of the Inquisition and ordered it to be carried into instant execution." Prescott, indeed, doubts whether this monstrous sentence was really pronounced, basing his doubt upon the insufficiency of testimony supporting it, but Motley writes later,

and cites more authorities than Prescott refers to. At any rate, Egmond and Hoorn, who were beheaded but a few months after this decree, on June 5, 1568, were most devout Catholics. Their only offence was that they had loved their country too well.

Common oppression and a common doom, therefore, united Catholics and Reformed in the defence of their country's liberties. While these measures on the part of king and prelates doubtless contributed largely toward turning Catholics from a religion wherewith oppression and persecution were unhappily identified, there was no reason why a Catholic should not be a good patriot while remaining attached to the old faith. Many did remain attached, even in the northern provinces, and shared in the glories and the benefits of the subsequent republic.

CHAPTER XIX.

HERMAN SCHINKEL OF DELFT.

AS we walked the streets of Delft uppermost in our thoughts was the recollection of one who was here cruelly put to death, and yet whose name does not appear upon the roll of Holland's martyrology. Yet he died in this manner as the result of his religious opinions, for his championship of the Reformed faith, for his unselfish devotion to the cause of religious liberty as opposed to the spiritual tyranny of Rome. We mean, of course, William of Orange, the father of his country, the most illustrious and exalted personality that moves upon the stage of history during those troublous and critical days of the sixteenth century. On Tuesday, July 10, 1584, he was shot down by the hand of an assassin hired by the king of Spain, inspired to a fearless fanaticism by the urgency of pope and prelates with their extravagant promises of spiritual advantage and heavenly glory if he would accomplish this dastardly deed. We made a point of visiting Delft on July 10, and on this date in 1886, three hundred and two years after the sad event, we stood in the

narrow vestibule where Orange fell, and saw upon the wall the print of the bullets that passed through his royal heart. It was the most illustrious martyrdom the soil of Holland ever witnessed, for Orange fell not only for the Reformed faith, but for true religious liberty—a thing in which the nineteenth century has scarcely yet come up to his ideas; he fell not only for the republic of Holland, but for human freedom and the people's rights the world over.

The murder of William the Silent has invested Delft with a melancholy fame, but the city has also bright associations, and it stands immortalized in the "Keramos" of Longfellow, who sings enthusiastically:

> "Yon pretty town
> Is Delft, with all its wares displayed—
> The pride, the market-place, the crown
> And centre of the potter's trade."

In Delft, too, was born Hugo Grotius, the most gigantic intellect of his age, and here Leeuwenhoek, a humble burgher, invented the microscope and began that series of investigations with it which have astounded the world and created whole departments of science. And Delft, finally, claims our notice as the birthplace of a martyr and the scene of his martyrdom.

On the 8th of April, 1568, Herman Schinkel,[1]

[1] Brandt, *Historie*, etc., Vol. I. pp. 482–484.

master of arts, a man noted for his learning, was placed under arrest by the magistrates of his city. It was in the midst of momentous events and on the eve of still greater that this arrest took place. William of Orange was in the field; the Eighty Years' War had begun, but it had not yet affected the towns of the interior: they were still waiting for results. The municipal governments especially were exceedingly conservative and marvelously careful to observe the wishes of the king, since Alva and his eleven thousand veterans had come, and while the Blood Council was in the full swing of its sanguinary work.

Accordingly, even though it was as late as the year 1568 and within a month of the patriot victory at Heiligerlee, the Delft magistrates apprehended their learned townsman—according to some, a professor in one of the high schools of the city—on an apparently insignificant charge. As was frequently the case in those days, the man of learning was also a printer and publisher. He was accused of having published certain books forbidden by the king's placards. He employed several lines of defence with great ingenuity, but without avail. His first move on his appearance before the municipal court was intended to throw his judges off their base by an appeal to the stirring events in the midst of which they were living. In consequence of the mighty popular movement in favor of the Reformation

manifested by the great audiences at field-preaching services, even the regent Margaret had become somewhat inclined to compromise. When the "Petition of the Nobles" came before her, therefore, she consented to leave the placards somewhat in abeyance until the reply of King Philip could be obtained. To this suspension of the placards Schinkel appealed to invalidate the right of the magistracy to arrest him on their authority, but the magistrates were too well aware of Alva's rule to dare sustain their prisoner's defence on this ground. He then frankly confessed that he had printed a volume of versified Psalms, the Catechism, the Confession of Faith, the Shorter Confession of the Christian faith translated from the Latin of Beza, and a little book treating of the Lord's Supper. Brandt does not specify what catechism or confession is meant, but, as the Heidelberg Catechism was published in 1563, and had been adopted, together with the Belgic Confession of Guy de Bres, at the Convention or Synod of the Reformed churches held at Antwerp in May, 1566, there can be little doubt that these two standards of our faith are referred to. Now, in regard to these books, he maintained that there could be no offence in having printed them. The last, on the Lord's Supper, had been placed in his hands in manuscript by a preacher who had translated it from the German. As for the others, they had been repeatedly printed in Holland without leading

to prosecution therefor, for, according to an ordinance proceeding from the prince of Orange as stadtholder of the province for the king, it was prohibited to print "spiteful, scandalous and notorious" books, but books on Christian doctrines could not be interpreted as belonging to such a category. Even on this subject, however, controversial books which were full of bitterness he was wont to avoid publishing. He reminded the magistrates, also, that he had been summoned to appear two or three times before them at the town-hall, and that they had then simply enjoined him to be careful not to print "spiteful things." His next plea gives us a vivid insight into the fact that the ancient religion was rapidly losing its hold upon the people of Holland. He claimed that he pursued the trade of printing mainly as a business, and not to propagate any special teachings; in consideration of his making a living, he had to print that which would sell most readily. The books he had mentioned were in universal demand; everybody was reading them. On the other hand, he had lost heavily by the printing of a large quantity of Romish hymn-books. "The times ran so that he could sell none of these."

During Schinkel's confinement in prison, which lasted more than fifteen weeks, he was taken seriously ill, so that his life was despaired of. He had a petition served upon the magistrates while he was sick, asking to be discharged on bail. He cited the

case of two citizens of Antwerp—one a printer, the other a wood-engraver—to whom such a privilege had been granted in similar circumstances, and this, as a precedent, would warrant the magistrates of Delft to do the same for him; but neither the plea nor the legal learning supporting it had any effect upon his judges.

The *Schepens*—a name and function derived from the Roman *scabini* or *judices*—were the municipal court in Dutch cities. There was, of course, no such thing in Holland as our jury system. These Schepens were a jury of judges, and varied in number from five to seven or nine; in Delft there were seven of these functionaries. About the middle of July, 1568, the trial of Herman Schinkel rested, and his case was left to their decision. So skillful and varied had been his defence that no less than six were convinced of their duty to release him, as nothing had been proved against him worthy of punishment under the laws or privileges of the town or province. It does not appear that the one of their number who differed from them tried to bring forward any arguments to convince the others that their prisoner was guilty. He chose, however, a more potent method of persuasion: he bade them reflect what would be the consequence of drawing down upon their heads the displeasure and wrath of the king, as would certainly occur if they allowed the accused to go free. The terrors of the prospect thus

suggested to their minds brought all the six over to the side of the one, and Herman Schinkel was condemned to die by the sword. With such a record behind him, it is not pleasant to learn that the time-serving Schepen was ever honored by the republic. But Brandt remarks: "Of this seventh man it is told that four years later, when a change had taken place, he quickly turned his coat with the turn in affairs, and was employed at The Hague in very high offices."

Herman Schinkel displayed a remarkable composure and fearlessness while looking forward to the violent death before him. He was in the flower of his manhood—scarcely thirty-two years of age; he had a fair young wife, whom he dearly loved, and three children, twin-daughters about six years old and an infant son of about one year and a half. On the day before his execution, and on the day itself, he wrote several affectionate letters to his wife and his children. Those to his wife breathed a spirit of firm resignation to his own fate and gave evidence of a deep and strong love for her. He wrote to each of the little girls and left a letter for his baby-boy, full of paternal solicitude for his welfare, to be read by him when he should be able. His unparalleled calmness in view of death has been carefully recorded by learned friends. Two or three hours before he suffered martyrdom he wrote two Latin poems inscribed to two of his acquaintances. One

Van Hoorn, who accompanied him to the scaffold, in a subsequent writing gives him the title of "the despiser of death," for on the way to his execution, while conversing about the consolations in death, Schinkel took occasion quietly to remind his friend of a passage in Seneca's "Octavia" (the forty-second line) where, in his judgment, instead of *Tamais*, the text should read *Thamesis*. We may think it somewhat strange that a man with such iron nerves and so perfectly void of a dread of death did not improve the moment of his execution by addressing words of encouragement and exhortation to the by-standers. He passed away with silent lips, but with strong heart, relying upon God, whose truth he had helped to disseminate by the mighty agency of the press.

Herman Schinkel was beheaded on July 23, 1568, the day before the duke of Alva had completed his campaign of retaliation in the North. The disgrace to the Spanish arms sustained in the first pitched battle of the Eighty Years' War had been wiped out in the battle of Jemmingen, on July 22. The victory of patriotism, with all its bright hopes, had been smothered in blood, the army of freedom had been utterly annihilated, and now the whole country lay in abject, groveling fear at the feet of the inhuman governor, to be scourged with scorpions, to be drained of blood and treasure, to complete the measure of the eighteen thousand six hundred victims

which it was Alva's boast had been sacrificed by him to compel obedience to despotism and to quench the life of the Reformation. One grand soul yet bore up amid these overwhelming waves of trouble, but in November of this same year ill-fortune had driven William of Orange too, defeated and disheartened, from the country he had come to save. The night of gloom hung dark and heavy over the land for nearly four years before another ray of hope penetrated the gloom and liberty for Church and State began to rise again above the horizon of possibility.

CHAPTER XX.

FOUR CONVERTED PRIESTS.

WE do not in our branch of the Church of the Reformation insist upon the efficacy or necessity of apostolic succession to make valid ordination to the ministry of the gospel. The Anglican Church rests secure in the descent of apostolic grace upon her priests because her founders received ordination from the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, which is the link between the times of the Reformation and the times of the apostles; but if we deemed it worth while to emphasize the same fact in regard to the ministry of the Reformed Church of Holland, we could easily establish their claim to some sort of apostolic succession. Among the clergy of the Romish Church the Reformation found its earliest adherents and its foremost preachers. There were, indeed, no bishops, but John Pistorius was a priest, Henry Zutphen was prior of a monastery, Peter Gabriel, one of the earliest field-preachers, was a monk and priest, and in the present chapter we shall notice the martyrdom of four priests at once. It is more than supposable that

these men, and many more whose names have not come down to us, prepared others to propagate the gospel, and in a manner, if not officially, yet actually, transmitted to these others ministerial character and functions.

In traveling by rail from the city of Alkmaar to that of Helder, in the province of North Holland, we remember seeing a beautiful brick church with light sandstone trimmings, built in the cruciform style and of very generous proportions. It was an edifice in every way worthy of some of our own finest avenues and quite on a par for size and elegance with the largest churches of our own country. Yet this was but a village church. The place rejoiced in the not very musical name of Schagen, numbering about twenty-six hundred inhabitants. One of the priests whose death we shall soon notice, Sybrand Jansen, was pastor of this village. Two others, Arend Vos and Walter Simonsen, were the pastors, respectively, of the villages of Lier and Monster, in the province of South Holland, near the city of Delft. Monster is to-day a place of over four thousand inhabitants, and is situated near the seashore; Lier numbers but nine hundred people, and is much farther inland. But the region where these places are located is noted for its productive soil, and is usually designated the "garden of Holland." The fourth priest, Adrian Jansen—not related to Sybrand, so far as we can learn from the record—was pastor

of the village of Ysselmonde, near Rotterdam. This place derives its name from the fact that it is situated immediately opposite the point where the river Yssel makes its junction with the waters of the Maas.

These four villages being all situated within the province of Holland—not then divided into South and North—the pastors were summoned to appear before the court of Holland, which sat in The Hague, to answer charges of heresy preferred against them. They were thrown into prison while awaiting their trial, which did not occur until nearly two years after their apprehension. This prison was the *Gevangenpoort*, or Prison-Gate, in the heart of the city. It does not seem, however, that they were subjected to very great hardships, or even restrictions. They enjoyed visits from several friends from different provinces; they frequently wrote to their wives and families, and were not forbidden to address epistles full of pastoral instruction, advice and exhortation to different churches besides their own where the faith of the Reformation had penetrated. They even enjoyed the privilege of theological disputations with sundry Anabaptists confined in the same prison. It does not appear that they succeeded in convincing them of their errors, but Arend Vos recorded the dialogues which he himself held with them and published them in book-form, and this production was considered a

valuable contribution to the literature of the controversy on this subject.

At last, on the 10th of May, 1570, the four prisoners were brought from their cell and placed before a spiritual court presided over by a regular inquisitor. This officer examined them in regard to their abandonment of the priestly office, their acceptance of another religion, their sentiments concerning the pope, how many sacraments they recognized, their opinions about the marriage of priests, and more such matters. Their replies, of course, were of a nature to bring down upon them the condemnation of death for heresy. As the spiritual court could not pronounce sentence of death, the case was handed over to the civil authorities; but these could not condemn a priest to death, hence the ceremony of degradation from the priesthood had to be performed upon the delinquents.

This took place on May 27. The four prisoners were conducted to a large room where were assembled the judges of the spiritual court and many other dignitaries. The bishop of Bois-le-duc and two abbots were charged with the performance of the ceremony. The converted priests were compelled to don the full canonical garments of their office, which they had now discarded for a long time. The bishop then approached them and with a silver knife scraped the tips of their fingers, because these had held the Host. He then shaved the hair from

the crown of the head of each, where the consecrating oil had been applied, and likewise scraped the bare scalp with the knife. Next the officiating dignitaries removed their priestly garments, saying to each in turn while this process went on, "*Exuo te vestem justitiæ, quam volens abjecisti*" ("I deprive thee of the robe of righteousness, which thou hast willfully cast off"). When this formula was pronounced over Arend Vos, the most aged of their number, he replied, "*Imo vestem injustitiæ*" ("Yea, the robe of unrighteousness").

The four subjects of this silly and meaningless ceremony did not fail to speak their minds to the assembled dignitaries of the Church and the State. Among other things, they boldly charged them with knowing better than to treat them in such a manner. Hereupon the officiating bishop laid his hand upon his heart and solemnly took his oath, calling God to witness that he knew no better than that he had acted according to the will of God, and that he had no other conviction than that the Roman Catholic religion was the only saving one. The aged Arend Vos, who had once lived upon terms of close intimacy with the bishop, here interposed and reminded him in the hearing of all that he had formerly held quite other convictions, but that he had iniquitously suppressed them, and that for this he would be called to a strict account in the day of the Lord. This created a sensation among those present, the more

so as they observed that the bishop trembled as he went on with the ceremony.

While the desecrated priests were remanded to prison to await their doom shortly, the bishop of Bois-le-duc and his abbots were entertained at a sumptuous banquet. They indulged so freely in the good things set before them that at the close they had to be assisted to their carriages The contrast was not lost upon the public. It was said by many, "Such impure and noxious persons play the master and are honored by men, while the godly and virtuous preachers are put to death for their good teachings and conduct."

Late in the evening of May 29 it was announced to the four pastors that on the morrow their sentence would be executed upon them. They immediately gave themselves up to holy exercises in order to prepare their hearts for the ordeal. Besides fervent prayers privately offered up or spoken audibly by each in turn, they engaged in the communion of the Lord's Supper as best they could under their distressing circumstances and the severe restrictions to which they were now subjected. On the following day, May 30, 1570, they were taken before the court and the sentence was formally pronounced: they were to be strangled at the stake and their bodies consumed by fire. Hereupon they gave public expression of their gratitude to God for deeming them worthy of suffering for his truth, and em-

braced one another and exchanged the kiss of peace. Then they were conducted back to prison.

Immediately after their return, Arend Vos, pastor of Lier, was conveyed to the scaffold. He ascended the platform with joy depicted upon his aged countenance. He addressed the assembled multitude, exhorting them to pray for him and saying that he was ready to die for what he had done in promoting the true knowledge of the Saviour; then, turning toward the stake, he fell down upon his knees and prayed aloud, the people answering with an "Amen!" when he had done. Rising to his feet, he placed himself against the stake of his own accord, crying, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit. O Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me!" As the noose was being adjusted and was gradually tightened around his neck he repeated the several clauses of the Lord's Prayer in Latin; and when he had reached "Forgive us our debts," he feel asleep in the Lord.

When he had expired, Sybrand Jansen, pastor of Schagen, was brought from prison; no one could detect the least fear or perturbation in his countenance as he stepped upon the scaffold. Turning to the insensible corpse of his friend, he said, "Farewell, my dear brother, Arend Vos!" He then laid aside his cloak and fell upon his knees, the people again responding with an "Amen!" to the martyr's prayer. He was then strangled at the stake.

Next, Adrian Jansen, pastor of Ysselmonde, was led forth to execution. His father approached him on the way from prison and said, "My dear son, bear thyself piously, for there is laid up for thee the crown of eternal life." He would have said more, but he was pushed aside by the officers. Adrian's sister also succeeded in forcing herself to his side, and said, "Dear brother, battle bravely; it will not last long, and eternal life is awaiting thee!" He presented an interesting appearance, being a young man of evident good breeding and cultivation. Many were moved to tears as they saw him about to be subjected to so dire a fate. To his fervent supplications for pardon and strength the people again responded. Rising from his knees, he went voluntarily to the stake and kissed it. While the noose was being placed about his neck he cried in the hearing of all, "Beware, dear brethren and sisters, of the accursed idolatry which is still daily practiced by the papal Church." In a few moments he breathed his last.

Last of all, Walter Simonsen, pastor of Monster, was conducted from his prison. He had been suffering for some time from illness, but he showed no less firmness than his predecessors at the moment of death. He thanked the Lord that he had permitted him to be a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, that he might thus also be glorified with him. He placed himself with great composure before the stake

reserved for him, while the people observed with wonder that he looked without any signs of consternation upon the distorted bodies of his companions. When life had departed, his body and those of the other martyrs were consigned to the flames.[1]

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 873–886.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LAST MARTYRS.—CONCLUSION.

HENRY SCHOUTEN, a native of The Hague, was summoner of the supreme court at Mechlin, and also of the court of Holland, in his native city. Being under concern of mind on the subject of religion, he cast about for the best manner in which to worship and serve God and attain the salvation of his soul. He found the world in a veritable turmoil of opinions. He did not find satisfaction in the ancient religion in which he had been brought up. Among the Reformed he found a confusion of tongues like that at Babel. At one time he listened to the Anabaptists; the Lutherans had another message of salvation: the Calvinists came to him with still a different one. At last, however, he gave his adherence to the Reformed or Calvinistic opinions, which were fast gaining the upper hand in Holland and Zeeland.

This happened some time during the year 1566. As we have seen in previous chapters, some scanty privileges had at that time been forced from the regent Margaret. Having been chosen an elder in

the congregation at The Hague, Schouten had thrown open his house for the assemblies of the faithful. But early in 1567, when Alva was expected and the former restrictions were applied again in all their force, Schouten came into difficulty on account of his activity in the cause of the Reformed; he accordingly fled to Germany. After his departure his wife still invited the congregation to meet at her house, but at last, having left home in order to meet her husband, she, as well as her husband, was banished from the city and their goods were confiscated. For a time they lived at Dantzig in Germany, but later they moved to England. Here Schouten purchased a vessel and engaged in commerce. When, at one time, he had been driven by stress of weather to seek shelter on the Texel coast, he was detained there for sixteen weeks, and was betrayed by one of his mates. The ship was taken to Enkhuizen, where Schouten was thrown into prison, but after a few days he was conveyed to The Hague. His case was speedily disposed of. Within ten days he was sentenced by the court to be beheaded as an exile who had returned to his country without permission. The sentence was executed on December 15, 1571. In expectation of a riot among the people, the authorities ordered him to be put to death before eight o'clock in the morning instead of at the hour first announced, late in the afternoon. By reason of some infirmity he was unable to kneel

before the block, and hence his head was struck off while he was seated upon a chair. His body was honorably buried by some of his friends and fellow-Christians.

This martyrdom is significant because it is the last one suffered in the cause of the Reformation for which the authorities of a Holland city or a court of Holland were responsible. Three and a half months after the death of Henry Schouten, on April 1, 1572, Brille was taken from the Spaniards, the spirit of liberty immediately seized upon the people of Holland, and everywhere Spanish garrisons were banished from the cities and municipal governments that were friendly to Spain were deposed. In spite of Alva's armies, successful only in the case of Haarlem, this state of things became permanent. The tide of affairs, which had been taken at the flood, led on to fortune, and Protestantism and civil liberty never occupied again a lower level. But upon the soil of the province of Holland a few more martyrdoms occurred, and remain to be noticed, which were suffered at the hands of Spanish invaders.

The city of Leerdam, numbering scarcely four thousand people, is situated in the province of South Holland, near the borders of Gelderland. After the first burst of patriotic enthusiasm, in 1572, the cities of Gelderland had soon yielded to Alva. Zutphen dared to resist slightly, and an

awful punishment was meted out upon her; then all the province became again completely subdued. From Gelderland a force of the Spaniards crossed over into Holland and laid siege to the little city of Leerdam in the latter part of June, 1574. The enemy was then before Leyden, and this may have been meant as a manœuvre having some bearing upon that more important siege. Eleven days sufficed to reduce the place, and the inhabitants capitulated. Their lives were guaranteed to them. No sooner had the Spaniards entered than the citizens were commanded to assemble at the town-hall. They expected a repetition of the Naarden horror; this was not their fate, however. They were commanded, on pain of immediate massacre, to yield up their Reformed preacher, Joos de Jonge. They nobly hesitated, and seemed ready to undergo the frightful alternative rather than betray their beloved pastor. But one among the inhabitants of the city, who hated all religion and every preacher of the gospel, had happened to see the pastor make his escape; he pointed out to the Spaniards the pastor's whereabouts. The soldier sent to arrest De Jonge struck him on the head with the butt-end of his musket and brought him bleeding into the presence of the Spanish colonel. At the same time the schoolmaster, Roger Joosten, and Quirinius de Palme, pastor of the village of Heukelom, in the vicinity, who had fled to Leerdam for refuge, were

apprehended. They were all condemned to death and hanged early in July, 1574.[1]

The first city of Holland province which furnished a martyr to the Reformation was Woerden, the birthplace of John Pistorius; the city which was the scene of the last martyrdom within the province was that of Oudewater, a few miles directly south of it. It has a population to-day of only twenty-four hundred souls. It became the scene of this martyrdom on the occasion of the last incursion of Spanish arms into this province. Motley tells us that on July 19, 1575, "Oudewater, entirely unprepared for such an event, was besieged by Hierges, but the garrison and population, although weak, were brave. The town resisted eighteen days, and on the 7th of August was carried by assault, after which the usual horrors were fully practiced. Men, women and children were murdered in cold blood or obliged to purchase their lives by heavy ransoms. Almost every house in the city was burned to the ground." Oudewater was the birthplace of Arminius, who at this time was a boy of fifteen years; he may have been away from home, however, during the siege and massacre, pursuing his studies at some university. At any rate, he was spared to be the occasion of bitter theological strife, and to give a name to a phase of theological thought.

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, pp. 940, 941.

Among those who were reserved for the payment of ransoms was the Reformed pastor, John Gelasius. He was brought to the hostile camp, his captors being ignorant of his quality or profession. He was required to pay five hundred guilders (two hundred dollars), and no doubt the payment of this sum—no small figure for those days—would have procured his liberation. A woman belonging to a religious order betrayed him, however, and he was forthwith dragged to the public gallows in the market-place. Here the monks and the priests, whose reign had ceased in Oudewater before the invasion, vented their spite upon the unhappy clergyman. He had seen his son murdered before his eyes and his wife severely wounded by the ruthless soldiery, but pity was a stranger to these people, and they annoyed him in every possible way. A crucifix was thrust almost into his face, and he was asked if he would not put his faith in that. At last the Seigneur de Hierges commanded an end to be made of this exhibition of obstinacy on the part of the heretic, and Gelasius expired upon the gallows. A year and a half later his body was decently buried in the church, beneath the pulpit.[1]

We call the martyrs noticed in the present chapter the last of Holland. This is undoubtedly true if by this name we understand only the provinces of North and South Holland, for foreign foe here

[1] *Groot Martelaarsboek*, p. 943.

never again secured a foothold, and none of the cities came into the hands of Spain after 1575. In the other provinces of the Dutch republic war raged for many a year afterward, but even here, though many fortresses were held by the enemy and many suffered death in the cause of civil and religious liberty, it was rarely if ever again in the form of a martyrdom such as would claim our notice. At least, we have found no records of such cases that are worthy a detailed account.

Now, in conclusion, we cannot but refer to one important circumstance. In these pages we have made particular mention of not more than about fifty martyrs in all. There have been many names, indeed, found by us in standard authorities which we have omitted to introduce into our series because history has devoted to them not much more than the record of their names or the dates of their death. Yet had we brought these names before our readers, the list of the martyrs of Holland would not have been increased very materially, after all; the number would even then hardly have reached one hundred. It must be remembered, however, that this small number does not represent in the remotest degree the multitudes who actually suffered martyrdom in the Netherland provinces. Persecutions raged more fiercely in the southern or Walloon provinces, and the records of martyrdom there

present many more names than those of Holland. But, whether in the Dutch provinces or in those of the Walloons, the list is meagre, compared with the scores of thousands who were sacrificed. The paucity of recorded names is explicable only from the very excessiveness of the number to be preserved.

What, then, are some of the estimates in regard to the number of those who died in these provinces for the faith of the Reformation? We will appreciate this the better if we compare the annals of persecution elsewhere. Gibbon places the number put to death throughout the Roman empire during the last or Diocletian persecution at two thousand. Whatever fault we may find with his design for bringing the number down to that estimate, it will not be safe to dispute the fact. Torquemada sacrificed two thousand in Spain during his presidency of the Inquisition. In England eight hundred perished during the five years' reign of Bloody Mary. Our figures become amazingly larger as soon as we turn to the persecution of Protestants in the Netherlands. We begin, of course, with the reign of Charles V. "The number of Netherlanders," says Motley, "who were burned, strangled, beheaded or buried alive in obedience to his edicts has been placed as high as one hundred thousand by distinguished authorities, and has never been put at a lower mark than fifty thousand." How many more were butchered under Philip we dare not even estimate. One chronicler

records among the events of a single year that there was no city so small that there were not in it fifty, a hundred, two, and in some instances three, hundred put to death.[1] What else could we expect from such a decree as that promulgated in February, 1568? It was Alva's boast when he retired from the country in 1573, after ruling it in the king's name for only six years, that he had put to death eighteen thousand six hundred heretics and rebels—synonymous terms in those days. It is no wonder that amid such wholesale butcheries only a few names could have been saved for record.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Was ever a Church more abundantly enriched than that of Holland? Well may she be devoutly proud of her list of martyrs. Surely this exceeding great cloud of witnesses bears testimony to God's special favor and the signal honor put upon her. As such there is no bound to the hopes of blessing and prosperity which may be cherished in regard to her. What has not God wrought for her in the past, with dangers external and contentions internal threatening her very life, yet ever bringing her forth unto a more determined stand for truth and vital godliness! It is with confident hope that we may look to a happy issue, therefore, of the agitations and troubles that at this very hour are testing her faithfulness.

[1] Van Meteren, a very high authority on Dutch history.

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